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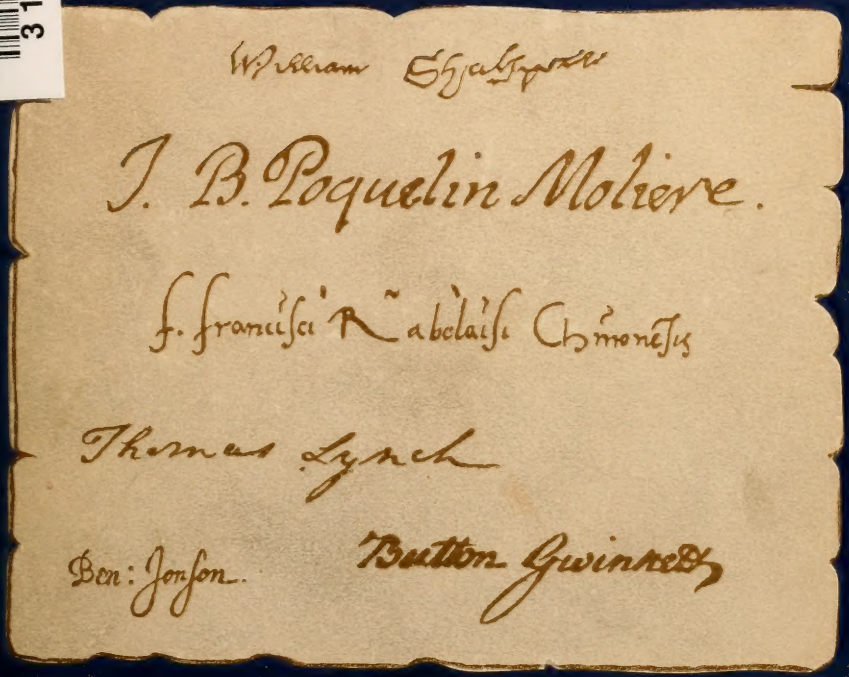

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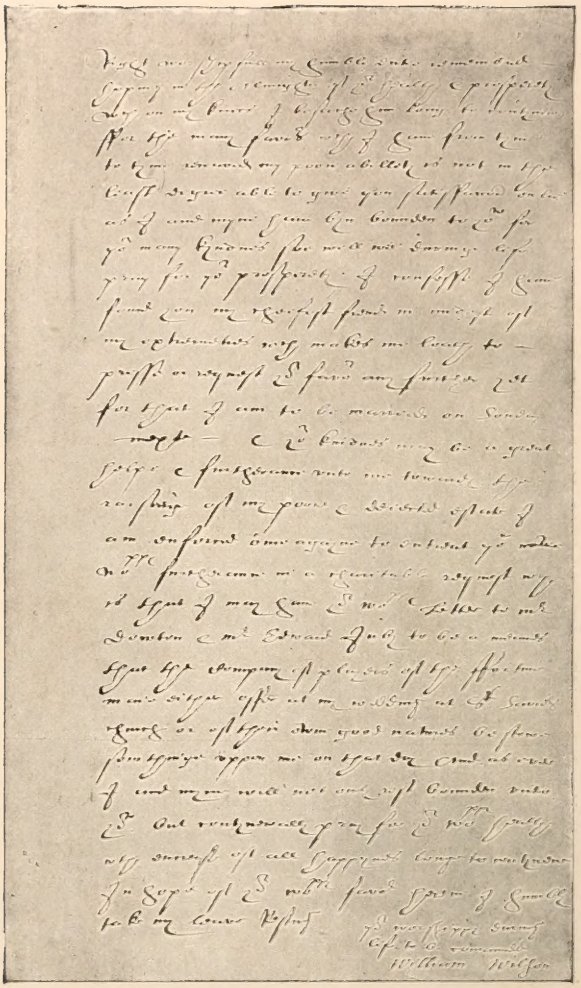

A.L.S. OF WILLIAM WILSON, AN ACTOR OF THE "FORTUNE" THEATRE, TO EDWARD ALLEYN, OF DULWICH, 1620.

Bb
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CHATS ON AUTOGRAPHS

Alexander Meyrick

BY

A. M. BROADLEY

AUTHOR OF "DR. JOHNSON AND MRS. THRALE," JOINT AUTHOR OF "NAPOLEON AND THE INVASION OF ENGLAND," "NELSON'S HARDY," "DUMOURIEZ AND THE DEFENCE OF ENGLAND AGAINST NAPOLEON," ETC., ETC.

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L. J. CIST

[Preface to Tefft Catalogue, 1866]

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LONDON

T. FISHER UNWIN

ADELPHI TERRACE

MCMX

To

SIR ISAMBARD OWEN,

D.C.L., M.D., F.R.C.P.

HON. FELLOW OF DOWNING COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,

FIRST DEPUTY CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WALES,

AND VICE-CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL,

A ROYAL AND FREE CITY, RENOWNED FOR THE

RICHNESS OF ITS ARCHIVES, AND ITS CLOSE

ASSOCIATION WITH MEN OF LETTERS,

THIS VOLUME IS, WITH HIS PERMISSION, INSCRIBED

BY THE AUTHOR.

The Knapp, Bradpole, *May* 6, 1910.

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PREFACE

"Life is a leaf of paper white
Whereon each one of us may write
His word or two—then comes the night."
LOWELL.

MR. T. FISHER UNWIN has asked me to "chat" on autographs and autograph collecting. Fifteen years ago the late Dr. George Birkbeck Hill "talked" on the same subject in compliance with a similar request. Still more recently Mr. Adrian H. Joline, of New York, has given the world his "meditations" on a pursuit which another American unkindly describes as "that dreadful fever," but which Mr. Joline, as well as the present writer, regards in the light of "the most gentle of emotions." Mr. Joline expressed, on the first page of his interesting book, a profound conviction that nobody could by any possibility be persuaded to read it unless already interested in the topic with which it so effectively deals. One of the principal objects of the *causeries* I have undertaken to write is to reach, if possible, a public to which the peculiar fascination and indescribable excitement of the autograph cult are still unknown, and to demonstrate (to a certain extent from my own personal experience), the practical utility, as well as the possibilities of

material profit, inherent in this particular form of literary treasure-trove. For the benefit of the uninitiated (and in this case the uninitiated are in a vast majority) it is necessary at the onset to differentiate between the "Autograph Fiend" (the phrase is, I believe, American in its origin), who pesters, often with unpardonable persistence, well-known personages for their signatures in albums or on photographs, and the discriminating collector who accumulates for the benefit of posterity either important documents or the letters of famous men. "Nothing," writes Horace Walpole, "gives us so just an idea of an age as genuine letters, nay history waits for its last seal from them."

Adopting the words of one of the most gifted letter-writers who ever lived as a text, let me clearly define an autograph for the purposes of these pages to be :—

A letter or document written or signed by any given person.

An autograph collector, as I understand the term, is one who acquires and arranges documents of the sort now described. A collector of autograph signatures has nothing in common with the scientific autograph collector. Those who deliberately cut signatures from important letters are in reality the worst enemies both of the autograph collector and the historian. Vandalism of this kind (often committed in happy unconsciousness of the consequences) brings with it its own punishment, for detached signatures are almost worthless. Many years ago a dealer was offered sixteen genuine signatures of Samuel Pepys, their owner naïvely remarking that "he had cut them from the letters *to save trouble*." As a matter of fact he had in the course of a few

seconds depreciated the value of his property to the extent of at least £150. The letters (if intact) would have fetched from £15 to £20 each! "Album Specimens"—the results of the misplaced energy of the "autograph hunter," are of very little value as compared with holograph letters, and collections of this kind, although often elaborately bound up and provided with a lock and key, generally prove a woeful disappointment to the representatives of those who bestowed so much time and trouble on their formation. Collections of "franks," or the signatures in virtue of which Peers and Members of the House of Commons prior to 1840 could transmit letters through the post free of charge, must not be classed with those of "clipped" or isolated signatures. "Frank Collections" were often very interesting, and in the early years of the nineteenth century many well-known people devoted much time and trouble to their completion. The subject will be further alluded to in my text.

Although a personal element must of necessity pervade to some extent, at least, my chats on autographs, it is obvious that the subject is one which necessitates the greatest discretion. I shall carefully refrain from using any letter which has ever been addressed to me personally, although I have ventured to reproduce the signature of H.R.H. Ismail Pacha, one of the most remarkable men of his time, and that of Arabi Pacha, for whom I acted as counsel before the court-martial held at Cairo on December 2, 1882. Between 1884 and 1889 I was in constant correspondence with the late ex-Khedive Ismail, and from 1883 down to the present day I have frequently exchanged letters with my once celebrated Egyptian client, who returned from exile

some five years ago to spend the rest of his life in Cairo. Nor shall I, with one or two exceptions, give *in extenso* the letters of any living person, or letters which can possibly give pain or concern to others. Those who carefully study, as I do, the catalogues issued from time to time by dealers in autographs, both in this country and abroad, must often be astonished at the rapidity with which the letters of Royal and other illustrious personages "come into the market." At the death of a well-known authoress a few years ago the whole of the letters addressed to her were sold *en bloc*. I was not surprised to learn that the appearance of these "specimens" was the cause of much consternation and many heart-burnings.

The present age is essentially one of "collecting," and I hope to convince those who are interested in collecting generally, but have not yet included autographs in their sphere of operations, that a great opportunity awaits them, and that no form of collecting, either from a literary or antiquarian point of view, possesses greater charm or greater possibilities. In his recent works on the private life of Napoleon, M. Frédéric Masson has shown the inestimable value of autograph letters to the historian, and it is from unpublished and hitherto unknown MSS. in public and private collections that Dr. J. Holland Rose has obtained much of the new information which will give exceptional value to his forthcoming "Life of Pitt." If there is, as Mr. Adrian Joline points out, an abundance of "gentle emotion" to be found in the cult of the autograph, there is also no lack of pleasurable excitement. If autograph frauds, forgeries, and fakes are abundant, autograph "finds" are equally so. There is an indescribable pleasure in the detection of the former,

Recevez, mon Cher Broadley
l'expression de ma considération
distinguée
Paris le 16 Juin 83. Ismaïl

Yours very sincerely
Ibrahim Hilmy

انا اقدم صورتي هذه الى السيده لادي برودلي والدة صديقي
ووكيلي على روحي ولمحامي عني المستر برودلي ٢٧ اكتوبر ١٨٨٢
Ahmed Arabi

I present this likeness of myself to Mrs Broadley, the mother of my friend, the defender of my life on whom I lean Mr Broadley

With best wishes & salaams from
Yours very sincerely
A. Arabi the
Egyptian

SIGNATURES OF THE EGYPTIAN CLIENTS OF THE AUTHOR, 1882–1888, H.R.H. THE KHEDIVE ISMAIL; H.R.H. PRINCE IBRAHIM HILMY, HIS SON, AND ARABI PACHA.

(The latter in both Arabic and English.)

and an amount of enjoyable excitement connected with the latter, which none but the keen collector can entirely realise. Having convinced the antiquarian of the quite exceptional value of the autograph as a collecting subject, I shall hope to show my readers how they may most rapidly and most economically obtain that special knowledge necessary to become an expert. The autograph market, as at present constituted, is a very small one, but it is growing rapidly, and there is at this moment no better investment than the highest class of historical and literary autographs, provided one exercises proper discretion in purchasing and is content to wait for opportunities which often occur. The truth of my assertion as to the possibilities of profit in autograph collecting was never more clearly demonstrated than at the sale, in December, 1909, of the library of Mr. Louis J. Haber, of New York City, which was conducted by the Anderson Auction Company. Two days were exclusively devoted to autographs, and Mr. Haber has subsequently communicated to me a complete list of the prices at which he bought and sold the literary *rariora* now dispersed. The sensation of the sale was the selling of a letter of John Keats for £500. For this letter (an exceptionally fine and interesting one) Mr. Haber originally paid £25. Nevertheless, as I shall have occasion to point out, the English collector might have picked up some bargains at the Haber sale. An autograph poem by Edmund Burke, written in 1749, was sold for £4 8s., and I envy the purchaser of the characteristic letter of Lord Chesterfield, knocked down to some fortunate bidder for £3 8s. I do not hesitate to say that the Burke poem and the Chesterfield letter would have

fetched double the prices realised at Sotheby's. A letter of Mrs. Piozzi's (not improved by inlaying) fetched £8 12s. Mr. Haber gave £2 8s. for it, and I have bought a dozen equally good Piozzi letters at considerably less than that.

The *bonne camaraderie* which exists amongst autograph collectors is exemplified by the ready assistance rendered me in the preparation of my "chats." Dr. H. T. Scott, who has devoted the greater part of his life to the practical study of the subject, has given me many valuable hints; Mr. Telamon Cuyler, the future historian of Georgia, has rendered me important help in the matter of American autographs and autograph collecting; Mr. Charles De F. Burns, of New York, has given me (through Mr. Cuyler) most interesting data concerning the development of a fondness for autographs in the United States; while Dr. Thos. Addis Emmet has sent me the catalogue of his unrivalled collection of American MSS. now in the Lenox Library, New York. I tender my best thanks for the aid in various directions which I have received from Mr. Bernard Quaritch; Mr. Turner, President of the Anderson Auction Company, New York; Mr. Goodspeed, of Boston; Monsieur Noël Charavay, of Paris; Messrs. Maggs, Mr. J. H. Stonehouse, of Messrs. Sotheran, and Mr. W. V. Daniell; while Professor M. Gerothwohl, Litt.D., of the University of Bristol, has kindly translated the important letter of the Empress Catharine of Russia, and one or two other difficult examples of eighteenth-century French. My acknowledgments are also due to Mr. John Lane and Messrs. Harper Brothers, who have kindly allowed me to use certain illustrations, originally given in my books published by them; as well as to the proprietors of *The Country Home* for

allowing me to reproduce some of the autographs which first appeared in connection with the articles I have had the honour to contribute to that journal.

If I succeed in awakening an extended and more intelligent interest in autographs and autograph collecting, I shall have done something in my generation to help future historians, whose task must, of necessity, become increasingly difficult as time goes on. When I "commenced" collecting on my own account, to borrow an old-world, eighteenth-century phrase, I was literally groping in the dark, and necessity compelled me to buy my experience. I do not think I purchased it dearly. M. Noël Charavay thinks all good judges of autographs are near-sighted, and possibly this helped me in the early stages of my collecting career to distinguish the genuine article from a forged imitation. By attending to the hints which I shall give in the proper place the young collector will soon be able to recognise the original from the counterfeit. As the values of autographs increase (as they are sure to do) the temptation to forgery becomes greater, and consequently the application of the maxim *caveat emptor* more urgent. Respectable autograph dealers guarantee the letters they sell, but even experts are occasionally mistaken. Quite recently I lighted on a letter of Archbishop Fénelon in America, and thought I had secured a bargain. The source from which it came was unimpeachable, but M. Noël Charavay immediately confirmed my opinion that it was a lithographic forgery. There is, at any rate, one privilege that the autograph collector alone enjoys. It is difficult to say that any particular piece of china, medal, coin, print, or postage stamp is unique. There is always the danger of a duplicate turning up. With

autograph letters, on the other hand, each specimen may fairly be described as "absolutely unique." I have only once met with an exception to this rule. Some twenty days before his death Charles Dickens wrote a letter in duplicate to Buckstone the actor. To avoid the possibility of its miscarrying one was addressed to the theatre, and the other to Sydenham. I have the former and should much like to know what has become of the other, but even in this case the letters are not precisely identical.

So vast is the range of autographs (taking the subject as a whole and the term in its broadest sense) that the collector of the rising generation will do well to limit his sphere of operations to one particular subject or locality. It is only by doing this he can hope to arrive at anything like finality, or to make his acquisitions really useful from an historical point of view. Let him make the worthies of his own county, or birthplace, or calling the objective of his researches, and he will soon feel encouraged to go further afield. As long ago as 1855 a writer in the *Athenæum* remarked that "the story of what history owes to the autograph collector would make a pretty book." The present and future possibilities of autograph collecting as the handmaiden of history-making cannot be more forcibly illustrated than by the perusal of the marvellous catalogue issued by Messrs. Pearson, of Pall Mall Place, while these pages were going through the press. Here we have a collection of autographs by English sovereigns valued at £1,600, one of musical composers priced at £2,500, and another of 105 letters by great artists, beginning with Antonio del Pollajuolo (born in 1426) and ending with Corot, who died in 1875, for which £3,500, or an average price of £35 each is asked. Modern

historians will possibly be more interested in the portfolios of *unpublished* letters by Marlborough, Burke, and Pitt, of which the House of Pearson is at present the custodian. Without reference to them it will be impossible to say that the last word has been said about these three great men, who played in turn so important a part in our national annals. Their ultimate owner may have the opportunity of assisting the historian in the manner I have ventured to indicate.

A. M. BROADLEY.

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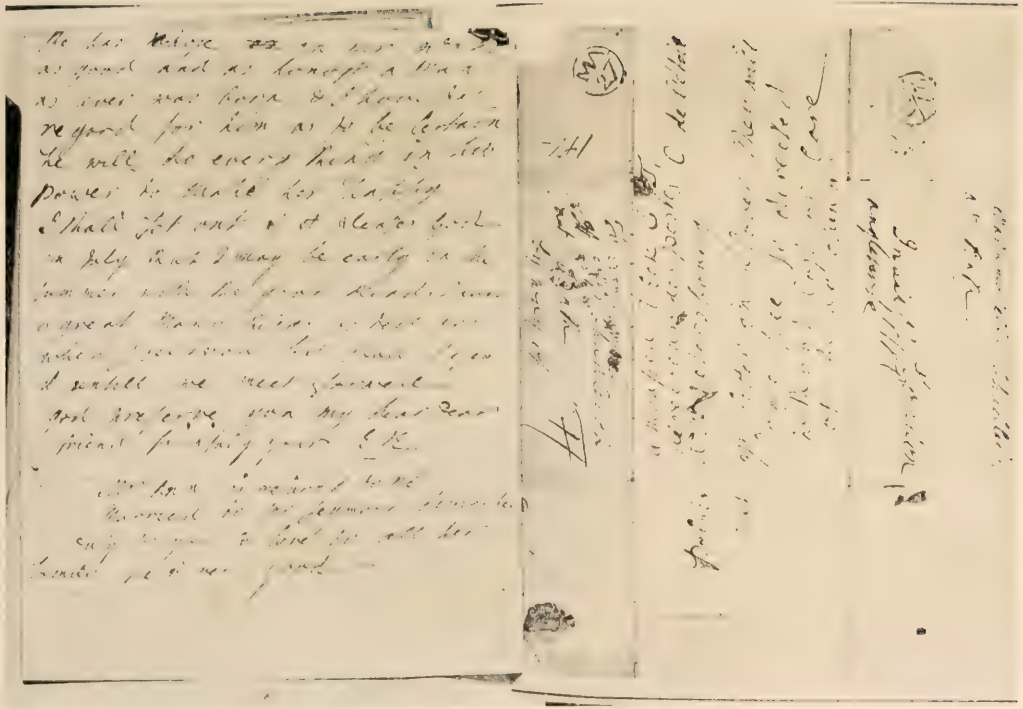
I

ON AUTOGRAPH COLLECTING GENERALLY



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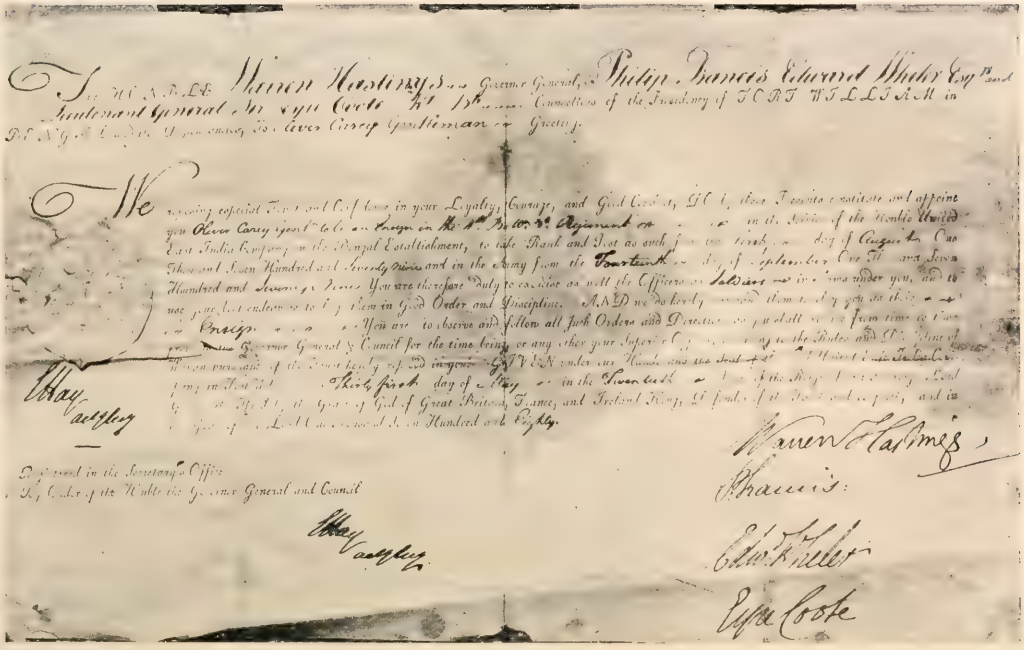


WARRANT SIGNED BY WARREN HASTINGS, PHILIP FRANCIS, EDWARD WHEELER, AND EYRE COOTE, MAY 31, 1780.

CHATS ON AUTOGRAPHS

CHAPTER I

ON AUTOGRAPH COLLECTING GENERALLY

Autograph collecting in relation to kindred hobbies—The genesis of the autograph—Examples of the *alba amicorum* of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—The conscript fathers of autograph collecting—Franks and their votaries—Album specimens and their value—The autograph-hunter and his unconscious victims—Anecdotes of some recent autograph "draws"

There can be no doubt that the handwriting of a man is related to his thought and character, and that we may therefore gain a certain impression of his ordinary mode of life and conduct.—GOETHE to CARDINAL PREUSKER.

MY friend Judge Philbrick, for some time President of the Royal Philatelic Society of London, tells me that the stamps known to collectors as the Post Office Mauritius "fetch anything." In his opinion a pair of fine examples of the 1d. red and 2d. blue would easily make £2,500. He believes the King,

when Prince of Wales, gave £1,500 for a single specimen. A set of the rarest issues of Sandwich Island stamps would be worth from £1,500 to £2,000, and there are at least twenty or thirty varieties which sell at something between £50 and £100. As a matter of fact, I believe the single "Mauritius Post Office" referred to exchanged hands in January 1904, at no less a figure than £1,950, and that at a moment when much excitement was caused in autographic circles by the appearance at Sotheby's of thirty-three pages of the MS. of "Paradise Lost," once the property of Jacob Tonson the publisher. The ultimate fate of this precious MS. will be referred to in connection with the subject of Milton's autographs, but it may be noted that in the same month a series of seven superb folio holograph letters of Napoleon, written during his first campaign in Italy, when his handwriting was still legible and his signature not the perplexing variation of scratches and blots of later days, was knocked down at the comparatively modest figure of £350, or less than one-fifth of the sum paid for the "Mauritius Post Office"! Before me lie several of the priced catalogues of the Sotheby autograph auctions of six years ago. Very few of the totals realised at these sales approached the price paid for this single stamp. At one of them Nelson's original letter-book of 1796–97, including the original drafts of 67 letters (many of them of first-rate importance) failed to fetch more than £190, while a two days' sale (that of December 5 and 6, 1904) brought only an aggregate sum of £1,009 16s., notwithstanding the fact that the 416 lots disposed of comprised a splendid series of Johnson and Thrale letters, a series of S. T. Coleridge MSS., and fine examples of letters by Pope, Richardson,

Marvell, Burke, Boswell, Goldsmith, Garrick, Nelson, and Lady Hamilton, together with historical documents signed by Queen Elizabeth, the two Charleses, Oliver Cromwell, and Queen Anne. The items thus disposed of would in themselves have made a fine collection if acquired by any one owner, for they represent the most interesting phases of our national annals, and they might have been acquired *en bloc* for £940, less than half the cost of that one most expensive stamp. Far be it from me to disparage a sister "hobby." All I seek to prove is that autograph collection has moderation in price to recommend it, as well as that inherent interest which Mr. Joline alludes to as "the gentlest of emotions."

In theory, at any rate, the lover of autographs can claim for his favourite pursuit an antiquity of origin which no print collector or philatelist, however enthusiastic, can possibly pretend to. In some shape or another MSS. were highly prized by the ancient Egyptians as well as the Greeks and Romans. The word "autograph" first occurs in the writings of Suetonius. We learn on good authority that Ptolemy stole the archives of the Athenians and replaced the originals with cunningly devised copies ; Pliny and Cicero were both collectors after the manner of the time in which they lived ; Nero recorded his impressions in pocket-books, and manuscripts of untold importance are supposed to lie buried in the lava-covered dwellings of Herculaneum. The Chinese, too, at a very remote period of their national existence were wont to decorate their temples with the writing or the sign-manuals of their defunct rulers. The Emperors Justinian and Theodoric are both reputed to have affixed their signatures by the aid of a perforated tin plate ; and the mystery which

attaches itself to the Epistles of Phalaris still awaits some definite solution. These, and a dozen other similar topics, may concern the history of writing in the abstract, but they are strange to the question of the genesis of the modern autograph in the sense already sufficiently defined and as considered from the collector's point of view.

By the irony of fate the origin of autograph collecting, as we now understand it, is clearly traced to the *alba amicorum* of the latter part of the sixteenth and the first decades of the seventeenth century. Men and women of light and leading were accustomed to carry about oblong volumes of vellum, on which their friends and acquaintances were requested to write some motto or phrase under his or her signature. Several interesting examples of these *alba* are to be seen amongst the Sloane MSS. in the British Museum. The earliest of them (No. 851) bears the date 1579. It commences with the motto and signature of the Duc d'Alençon, the suitor of our Virgin Queen. He has attempted a sketch, something like a fire, under which are the words "Fovet et disqutit Francoys," and below, "Me servir quy mestre Farnagues."

No. 3,416 is bound in green velvet with the arms of the writers beautifully emblazoned on each page. On one of these the Duke of Holst, brother-in-law of James I., has written:—

Par mer et par terre
Wiwe la Guerre.

It was in the *album amicorum* of Christopher Arnold, Professor of History at Nuremberg, that the author of "Paradise Lost" wrote

In weakness I am made perfect.

To that most learned man, and my courteous friend, Christopher Arnold, have I given this, in token of his virtue, as well as of my good will towards him.

JOHN MILTON.

London, A.D. 1651, *Nov.* 19.

To the album of Charles de Bousy (No. 3,415) Edward Sackville, afterwards Earl of Dorset, has contributed a motto neatly written in six languages. Late in the nineteenth century these ancient *alba* had their counterpart in the books of questions which, for a brief period, found favour in the eyes of the British hostess with a literary turn of mind. A page thus filled up by the late Duke of Coburg (Prince Alfred of England) is in my collection. In it the writer with perfect frankness discloses his ideas of happiness and misery, his favourite poets, painters, and composers, his pet aversions and the characters in history he most dislikes. The sheet of this modern *album amicorum* fetched one sovereign in the open market, and in many ways the views of the Duke are as interesting as those of the princes and poets who yielded to the entreaties of Charles de Bousy and Christopher Arnold.

In these early *alba* the interest of the handwriting formed the predominant attraction, but with the succeeding generations of collectors who gathered together stores of priceless MSS. the point of interest was almost entirely historical. It was reserved for the nineteenth century connoisseur to combine the interest which is purely historical with that which centres in the writer and the writing of any given letter or document. The value of the services rendered to the cause of history by men like

Sir Robert Bruce Cotton (1571–1631), John Evelyn (1620–1706), Robert Harley, 1st Earl of Oxford (1661–1724), Edward Harley, 2nd Earl of Oxford (1689–1741), and Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1753) cannot possibly be over-estimated.

Robert Harley purchased the papers accumulated by Fox, Stow, and D'Ewes, and the Harleian and Sloane MSS. form to-day a most important portion of the national collection in the British Museum. Thomas Hearne (1678–1735) laboured industriously at Oxford on the same lines as Robert Harley and Hans Sloane. He is said to have made each important discovery of autographic treasure-trove the subject of a devout thanksgiving.

Good work was done about the same time by Ralph Thoresby (1658–1725) and Peter Le Neve (1661–1729). Manuscripts entered largely into the "Museum of Rarities" formed by the first named, and the MSS. of the latter are now in the Bodleian Library and the Heralds' College. A little later came James West (1704–1772). Between 1741 and 1762 he held the office of Joint-secretary to the Treasury, and from 1746 till his death he was Recorder of Poole. Among other curiosities he got together a large number of valuable MSS. Born four years before West, James Bindley lived till 1818, thus becoming a contemporary of Upcott, Dawson Turner, and other early nineteenth-century collectors who prepared the way for the great work since accomplished by Mr. Alfred Morrison and others.

It now becomes necessary to say something of the "frank," which for more than an entire century exercised the minds of men and women in every condition of life to an extent it is now almost im-

possible to understand. The interest in the "frank" was philatelic as well as autographic, but no "frank" ever attained the high position now held by a Post Office Mauritius or early Sandwich stamp. The story of the "frank" is briefly thus: The right to send letters free of charge was claimed by Members of Parliament as far back as the reign of James I. It was fully discussed in the Commons immediately after the Restoration, and the claim was affirmed, although the Speaker, Sir Harbottle Grimston, refused to put a motion which he stigmatised as "a poor mendicant proviso unworthy of the honour of the House." The Lords rejected the Bill, because apparently the privilege was not to be extended to them, but it was eventually conceded to members of both Houses. The grossest abuses were soon committed. Under the cover of the "frank" fifteen couple of hounds were sent to the King of the Romans; "two maid-servants going out as laundresses" were forwarded to "My Lord Ambassador Methuen," two bales of stockings found their way, "post free," to our representative at the Court of Portugal. The "frank" was continually used for the transit of live deer, turkeys, and haunches of venison. In Queen Anne's time its operation was limited to packets weighing two ounces or less, and in the fourth year of George III. it was enacted that the "franking" Peer or M.P. should write the whole address and date on each letter. In 1795 the maximum weight of a "franked" letter was reduced to one ounce, and in 1840, on the institution of Sir Rowland Hill's penny postage system, the privilege (except in one or two special cases) was entirely abolished. Mr. Bailie, of Ringdufferin, Killyleagh, Co. Down, was one of the last of the frank-collecting enthusiasts.

About twenty years ago he thus wrote to the *Archivist*:—

"Although no further limitation or alteration was made between 1795 and 1840, great abuses still existed. Members supplied larger packets of franks to friends and adherents; some sold their privilege for large sums to banking and business firms; they also accepted *douceurs* for allowing letters to be directed to them, although intended for other persons, and servants' wages were frequently paid by franks, which were subsequently sold by them to tradesmen and others. It was computed that a banking house, having one of the firm an M.P., effected thereby a saving of £700 a year. In one week of November, 1836, about 94,700 franks passed through the London post alone, and in 1837 there were 7,400,000 franked letters posted. From 1818 to 1837 it was estimated that £1,400,000 had been lost to the Post Office through the franking system." The privilege was abolished on July 10, 1840, the only exception made being in favour of the late Queen's own letters and a few Government Departments.

The Inspectors of Franks in London, Dublin, and Edinburgh were highly paid and important officials. Mr. William Tayleure, of Adelaide Street, West Strand, headed a long list of dealers in "franks." 'Frank" auctions, prior to 1840, were as common as stamp auctions are to-day, and amongst the best known "frank" collectors were Lady Chatham (the daughter-in-law of the "Great Commoner"), Lord William FitzRoy and Mr. Blott, Inspector of Franks at the G.P.O. Mr. Bailie eventually became possessor of the Chatham and FitzRoy collections. He could boast of possessing the "frank" of every Peer since

the Union, with the single exception of F. A. Hervey, Earl of Bristol and Bishop of Derry.

For three generations at least one of the principal objects in life seems to have been the gratuitous acquisition of "franks." When James Beattie visited the Thrales of Streatham, his supreme delight lay in having secured six "franks" and the promise of a further supply; millionaires excused their epistolary silence on the plea of the difficulty to "get" a "frank," and even late in the "eighteen-thirties" Benjamin Disraeli wrote to his sister that he was sure that the sight of an unprivileged (*i.e.*, unfranked) letter on the Bradenham breakfast-table would cause the death of his venerable father.

The witty letters of Joseph Jekyll abound in amusing allusions to "franks." One day he writes, "Don't go into histericks at a Radical frank of Burdett's"; on another occasion, "I have bribed the Attorney-General for this frank," and again, "I postponed payment till the immaculate electors of Stockbridge had agreed to save *ninepence* out of your pin-money." Writing to Lady Blessington the Nestor of *beaux esprits* says: "I trust this will reach you if the Post Office can decipher my friend Wetherell's hieroglyphical frank, but Tories always make a bad hand of it."

Collections of "franks" like those of Mr. Bailie must still have some value. It is now difficult to obtain isolated examples, and to my mind they are infinitely more interesting, from every point of view, than detached signatures of individuals, however celebrated, and the great majority of "album specimens."

An "album specimen" is a letter or signature obtained in answer to a request for an autograph. If

the demand is made point-blank, the reply is rarely of any real value.

There are, of course, many exceptions to the rule. I have already alluded to the page of the "Confessions" Book filled up by the late Duke of Coburg. Bismarck is said to have been requested to add something on the page of an autograph album which already contained the autographs of Guizot and Thiers. The former had written, "I have learned in my long life two rules of prudence. The first is to forgive much; the second, never to forget." Thiers had placed below this the sentence, "A little forgetting would not detract from the sincerity of the forgiveness." Bismarck continued, "As for me, I have learnt to forget much, and to be asked to be forgiven much." I should not be surprised if the page of that album with the conjunction of these three great names yielded a record price.

It is the persistent seeker for "album specimens" who is known in America as the "Autograph Fiend," and on this side as the "Autograph Hunter." Possibly in the United States this type of collector is more aggressive than his English *confrère*. Longfellow was an early victim of the "A. F." In his diary he plaintively mentions the necessity of complying with thirty or forty requests of this kind. On January 9, 1857, matters reached a climax. On that day he made the following entry in his journal: "To-day I wrote, sealed, and dictated seventy autographs." Other celebrities were less complacent than the persecuted poet. "George Eliot" generally instructed Mr. Lewes to write a point-blank refusal, and an Archbishop of York intended to follow her example, but unintentionally delighted his tormentor with the signed reply, "Sir, I never give my auto-

graph, and never will." Frowde was in the habit of replying after this fashion :—

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Weller's friend (or perhaps Mr. Weller himself) would say that "autographs is vanity!"—but since you wish for mine, I subscribe myself,

Faithfully yours,
J. A. FROWDE.

Mr. Joline shows little mercy to such applicants. Lord Rosebery replies to a similar application :—

Lord Rosebery presents his compliments to Miss C., and would rather not make her collection and himself ridiculous by sending *it* the autograph of so insignificant a person.

An exceptionally considerate type of autograph-hunter succeeded in extracting the following charming note from the late R. L. Stevenson :—

VAILIMA, UPOLU, SAMOA.

You have sent me a slip to write on ; you have sent me an addressed envelope ; you have sent it me stamped ; many have done as much before. You have spelled my name right, and some have done that. In one point you stand alone : you have sent me the stamps for my post office, not the stamps for yours. What is asked with so much consideration I take a pleasure to grant. Here, since you value it, and have been at the pains to earn it by such unusual attentions—here is the signature,

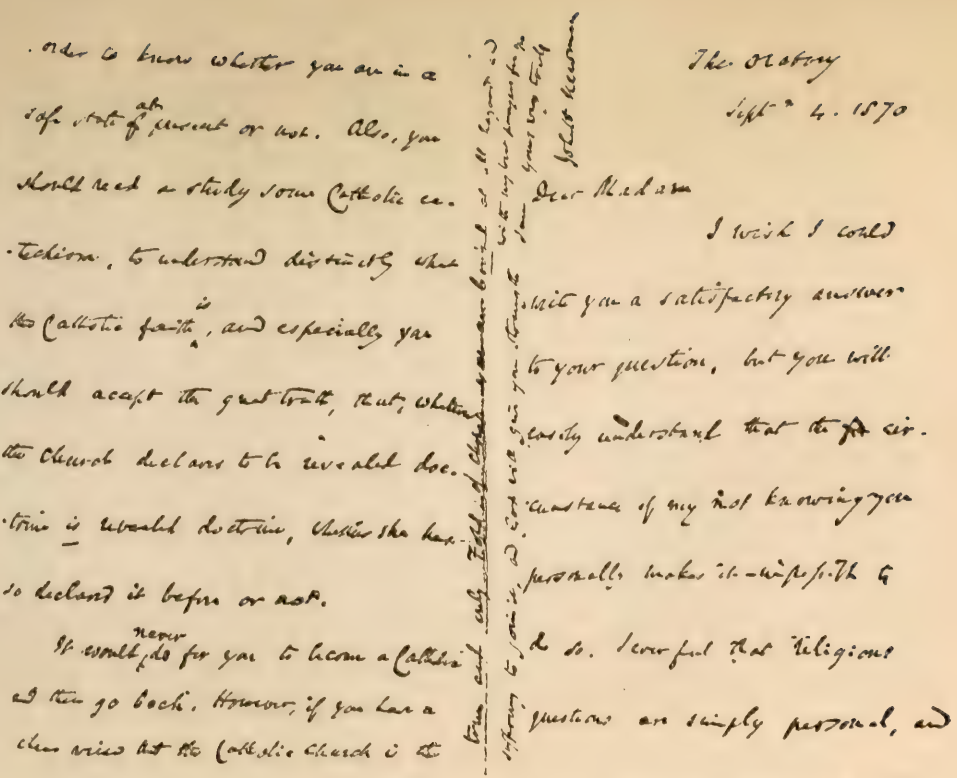
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

For the one civil autograph collector, Charles R.

Poe, like Longfellow, was merciful to his autograph-seeking correspondents, and their name was legion. In his opinion, "The feeling which prompts to the collection of autographs is a natural and rational

one." Thackeray and Dickens were equally considerate in the matter of these autograph petitions. More years ago than I care to recollect a young cousin of mine wrote to the former, and received, almost by return of post, a signed and dated card with a clever little sketch of a young lady inspecting an album. At the present moment this particular "specimen" is worth at least £10.

The most successful type of "Autograph Fiend" is the man who is able, on some clever pretence, to extract a letter of real interest and importance from his unconscious victim. Since I began to collect I have carefully watched the operation of these pious frauds, and am often astonished at the ease with which political, literary, and artistic celebrities fall into an all too transparent trap. Portrait painters are ready to send estimates to persons they never heard of; grave theologians are led by impostors into discussions on abstruse questions of faith and belief; astute statesmen like Mr. Chamberlain are induced to enlarge on burning problems of the hour; and venerable artists like Sir John Tenniel are apparently ready to furnish two pages of reminiscences for the mere asking. In the "eighteen-fifties" a swindler named Ludovic Picard acquired a really valuable series of autographs by writing to men like Béranger, Heine, Montalembert, and Lacordaire letters in which he posed as one of "the odious race of the unappreciated who meditated suicide, and sought in his hour of sore distress for valuable counsel and advice." Lacordaire sent him ten closely-written pages of earnest appeal, and Charles Dickens, who happened to be at Boulogne, fell an easy victim to the wiles of "Miserrimus," who was finally unmasked by Jules Sandeau while



The Oratory
Sept. 4. 1870

Dear Madam

I wish I could write you a satisfactory answer to your question, but you will clearly understand that the circumstance of my not knowing you personally makes it impossible for me to do so. I am sure that religious questions are simply personal, and

A.L.S. OBTAINED FROM CARDINAL NEWMAN BY AN AUTOGRAPH-HUNTER, SEPTEMBER 4, 1870.

carousing with a party of boon companions at a tavern. Dickens wrote as follows:—

Voici encore de bons remèdes contre votre affliction ! Surtout, on doit se souvenir constamment de la bonté du grand Dieu, des beautés de la nature, et de si touchantes félicités et misères de ces pauvres voisins dans cette vie de vicissitudes. Voici encore une manière de s'élever le cœur et l'âme, depuis les ténèbres de la terre jusqu'à la clarté du ciel. Courage, courage ! C'est le voyageur faible qui succombe et qui meurt. C'est le brave homme qui persévère, et qui poursuit son voyage jusqu'à la fin. Votre cas a été le cas d'une immense foule d'hommes, dont les cœurs courageux ont été victorieux, triomphants, heureux.

A query sent to Sir John Tenniel on the subject of the private theatricals at Charles Dickens's elicited this interesting letter:—

October 13, 1903.

DEAR SIR,—With many apologies for the delay, absolutely unavoidable, I have much pleasure in offering you such information as the only surviving representative of the "Guild of Literature and Art" and a memory of over fifty years may be able to supply in answering your polite letter of the 8th inst. received on Saturday.

The first performance of "Not so Bad as we Seem," at Devonshire House, in the presence of the Queen, the Prince Consort, and the Court, most certainly took place on the *16th* of May, 1851, just five months after I had joined the *Punch* staff.

But there was also a *second* grand performance of the play on the *27th*, to which the friends of the actors and distinguished people were invited by special invitation of the Duke.

Happily, after an almost hopeless search, I have found the bill of the play (which please to return when done with) of that performance, which is identical with the first except that the farce of "Mr. Nightingale's Diary," by Dickens and Mark Lemon, was *not* produced for the delectation of "Royalty"! Bill will also give you the names of the *dramatis*

Oct: 13th 1903

10, Portsdown Road,
Maida Hill, W.

Dear Sir -

With many apologies for the delay - absolutely unavoidable - I have much pleasure in offering you such information as the only surviving representative of the "Guild of Literature and Art." and a memory of over 50 years may be able to supply, in answering your polite letter of the 8th received on Saturday.

The first performance of "Not so bad as we seem" at Devonshire House - in the presence of the Queen - the Prince Consort - & the Court - must certainly took place on the 16th of May, 1851 - Just five months after I had joined the Punch "Staff":

But there was also a second grand performance of the play on the 27th to which the friends of the actors & a distinguished

Geo. R. Rogers. Esq.

TWO PAGES OF A.L.S. OF SIR JOHN TENNIEL, OF *PUNCH*, OBTAINED BY AN AUTOGRAPH-HUNTER, OCTOBER 13, 1903.

personæ, and you will see that the names of Maclise and Leech are not included in the list.

The last-named characters, some with only a line, some with none, were alluded to, and cheerfully, except by certain literary celebrities, and for myself "Hodge" was quite a good little part.

In the following year, however, owing to Forster's illness, the part of "Hardman" (a most important one) was at once assigned to me, and it is to that which Dickens alludes in his letter to Forster from Sunderland, August 29, 1852. I can hardly suppose that this letter can be of the least use to you, but

I am,
Faithfully yours,
JOHN TENNIEL.

Within a month this letter figured in an autograph catalogue at the modest price of 12s.

A candid friend writes to the Earl of Rosebery that he is sorely troubled in conscience as to some difficulty which has arisen in connection with the Premier's patronage of the race-course. He obtains a reply, seemingly after some demur:—

October 13, 1895.

MY DEAR ——, I did not the least in the world mean to imply the slightest shadow of blame to you for asking the question, which I do not doubt many other people are also asking. But for all that I am not able to answer it, and therefore you are unfettered in your treatment of it. It is strange, as regards my own position towards the Sporting League, Liberal candidates are abused on the ground that Liberals are opposed to sport, and then, on the other hand, the Nonconformist Conscience fires a broadside into him for what is thought to be too much allied to sport.

Yours very truly,
ROSEBERY.

Lord Rosebery's views on the elasticity of the Nonconformist conscience were sold for a crown, and

the same price was asked and obtained for a letter most ingeniously obtained from Mr. Chamberlain in the very early days of Tariff Reform Agitation :—

September 18, 1903.

DEAR SIR,—My correspondence is so enormous that I am compelled to dictate my letters even to my most intimate friends and relations, and the uncharitable suggestion that I am too proud to reply to workmen in my own handwriting is quite uncalled for.

I greatly appreciated your friendly letter and the compliment which you and your wife propose to pay me and which I readily accept. Tell me when the baby is to be baptized and exactly what you mean to call him, and I will see if I can find some little memento which may remind him in after years of his namesake.

Meanwhile I am glad to know that the tariff question is being discussed in your workshop. The time will come before long when all the working men will see how seriously their employment is threatened, and how necessary it is for them that the Colonial Markets should be kept open. The future of our trade depends on our relations with our kinsfolk across the seas, and if we do not seize the opportunity offered to us by them of increasing our trade with them we may not have another chance, but when we desire it may find that they have ceased to be willing. The Big Loaf cry is a sheer imposture. Nothing that I have proposed would increase the cost of living to any working man, and on the other hand it would give him the certainty of better trade and more employment. Wages, which depend upon employment, would tend to rise, and labour would gain all round.

We have had wonderfully good trade during the last two years, but there are signs approaching at present, and if they are fulfilled and every trade in London suffers from the free import of the surplus of foreign countries, the most bigoted Free Trader will regret that he was not wise in time and content to make preparation against the evil day.

Truly yours,

JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN.

The "Autograph Fiend" in this case certainly

deserves his name. He not only succeeds in obtaining an interesting letter, signed and carefully corrected by an ex-Cabinet Minister, which he is able to convert into five shillings, but he receives with it a promise that the writer will become the godfather of his real or supposed child!

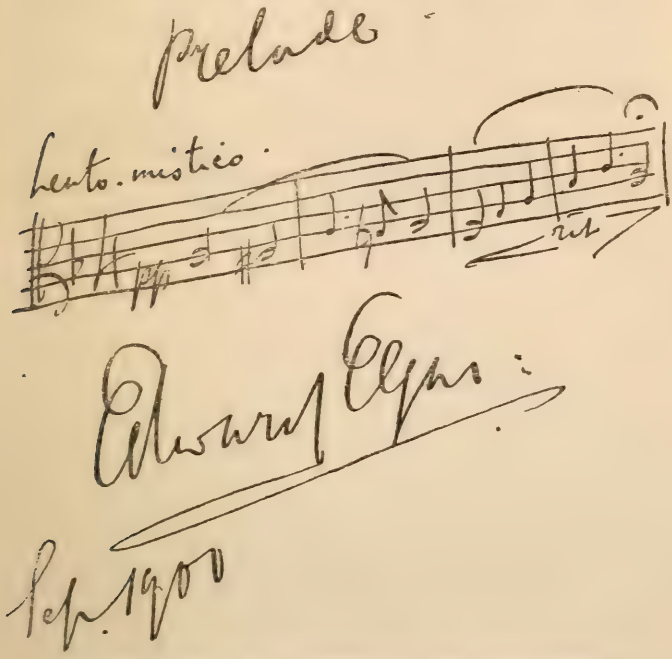
Mr. Ruskin's total lack of sympathy with the autograph-hunter was notorious. He was also known to entertain a strong antipathy to a certain conventicle. The following response to a demand for subscription elicited a very characteristic reply, which was promptly converted into ten pounds. In the presence of such recent examples of successful autograph "draws" as these, there is no need to repeat the old story of the Duke of Wellington's reply to a fictitious demand for the payment of a washerwoman's bill said to be due from Lord Douro.

Mr. John Ruskin to a correspondent:—

I am scornfully amused at your appeal to me, of all people in the world, the precisely less likely to give you a farthing. My first word to all men and boys who care to hear me is, Don't get into debt. Starve and go to heaven—but don't borrow. Try first begging—I don't mind, if it's really needful, stealing. But don't buy things you can't pay for. And of all manner of debtors, pious people building churches they can't pay for, are the most detestable nonsense to me. Can't you preach and pray behind the hedges—or in a sand-pit—or a coal-hole first? And of all manner of churches thus idiotically built, iron churches are the damnablest to me. And of all sects of believers in ruling spirit—Hindoos, Turks, Feather Idolaters, and any Mumbo-jumbo, Log and Fire Worshippers, your modern English Evangelical sect is the most absurd, and entirely objectionable and unendurable to me. All which they might very easily have found out from my books—any other sort of sect would—before bothering me to write to them Ever, nevertheless, and in all this saying, your faithful servant,

JOHN RUSKIN.

Autograph-hunting on the basis now exposed is only pursued in the hope of gain from the sale of the letter thus obtained. To attempt to form a collection in such a manner might lead to very unpleasant consequences. The only innocent form of



FROM THE PRELUDE OF "GERONTIUS," MS. BARS SIGNED BY SIR EDWARD ELGAR, SEPTEMBER, 1900.

autograph-hunting is that so frequently witnessed at concerts and musical festivals, and the albums thus filled are ultimately sold for a price which would sadly disappoint the original owner. In the next chapter I shall endeavour to give the beginner in autograph collecting such information as will enable

him not only to purchase genuine letters at the lowest possible price, but to arrange and classify them when so arranged to the greatest possible advantage. My firm conviction that at the present moment the judicious buying of autographs is one of the best possible investments, does not lessen the pleasure which we feel in examining those still-speaking relics of the past which enable us to say with Thomas Moore—

> Thus shall memory often in dreams sublime
> Catch a glimpse of the days that are over;
> Thus sighing look through the waves of time
> For the long faded glories they cover.

II

THE MODERN AUTOGRAPH COLLECTOR AND HIS EQUIPMENT

CHAPTER II

THE MODERN AUTOGRAPH COLLECTOR AND HIS EQUIPMENT

Useful books on autographs — Collections of autograph facsimiles — The autograph markets of London and Paris—Variations in price—Autograph catalogues and dealers—The treatment and classification of autographs

Letters are appendices to History—the best instructors in History and the best histories in themselves.—LORD BACON.

Scripta ferunt annos.—OVID.

THE modern autograph collector has certain advantages over his predecessors of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries which will compensate him in some measure for the difficulty of procuring choice specimens at the prices which ruled twenty and even ten years ago. Foremost amongst these advantages is facility of access to such autographic treasure-houses as the British Museum, the Record Office, and the National Library at Paris. It was as recently as the late "eighteen-fifties" that the priceless archives of the old India Office were ruthlessly sacrificed by the lineal successors of "John Company." Amongst other valuable MSS.

the archives of the Indian Navy went *en bloc* to the paper-mills. A single letter, blown accidentally from one of the carts used by the contractors who carried out this work of desolation, turned out to have been written in the reign of James I. by the Duke of Buckingham, and brought £5 to its finder. To-day it is probably worth at least five times as much again. The Record Office, in which such State documents and official correspondence as have survived the ignorance, carelessness, or iconoclasm of the past, now find a home, is, comparatively speaking, a modern institution. Notwithstanding the havoc wrought by the *sans-culottes* of the Terror and the Communists of forty years ago, the National Library in Paris is to-day the home of one of the most interesting collections of autographs in the whole world, including, it is said, something like ten thousand letters and documents written or signed by Napoleon. It is probably the result of the social upheavals of the past, and the wholesale dispersal of the contents of public and private muniment rooms towards the close of the eighteenth century, that autograph "finds" are more frequently made in Paris than anywhere else. It was there that I acquired the marriage settlement of Pamela FitzGerald,[1] executed at Tournay on December 26, 1792, and a sixteenth-century deed in which mention is made of a Royal Commission for the further

[1] It was fortunately catalogued under the name of "Genlis, Félicité Ducrest, Comtesse de," and so escaped attention. The principal witnesses are Philippe Égalité, Duc d'Orléans, and General Valence. The bride is described as "Citizen Anne Caroline Stéphanie Sims, aged 19, living in Paris, known in France by the name of Pamela, a native of Fago in Newfoundland and daughter of William Brixeij (*sic*) and Mary

exploration of Canada—*La Canadie.* Both of these documents cost less than 10s., and one of them, presented by me through Mr. Ross Robertson to the Public Library at Toronto, has now been framed, and is shown to visitors as a curiosity of the greatest interest and rarity. These great public institutions carry on in the twentieth century the good work commenced long ago by men like Evelyn, the Harleys, and Sloane.

The first thing I should advise an intending collector to do is to procure the "Guide to the MSS., Autographs, &c., exhibited in the Department of MSS. and in the Grenville Library of the British Museum."[1] This useful little volume contains no less than thirty plates of various descriptions, ranging from the articles of the Magna Charta and a page from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle to Nelson's last letter to Lady Hamilton, and examples of the handwriting of Marlborough, Wellington, Washington, Chatham, and Keats. At the end is a list of the different series of autograph facsimiles issued at intervals since 1895, and sold at a very moderate price. Next to the careful study of original MSS., nothing is so important to the collector as the careful and constant examination of well-executed facsimiles like those obtainable at the British Museum, where, at the cost of 7s. 6d., you can get thirty plates. The first in order contains fac-

Sims." The bridegroom is said to be "Edward FitzGerald, aged 29, generally living in Dublin, Ireland, a native of Whitehall, London, and the son of James FitzGerald de Leinster and Dame Amélie Lennox de Leinster." The Duke of Orléans figures in the deed only as Citizen Louis Philippe Égalité.

[1] Published by order of the Trustees in 1906; price 6d.

similes of autograph letters by Queen Catharine of Aragon, 1513; Archbishop Cranmer, 1537; Bishop Hugh Latimer (marginal notes by Henry VIII.), about 1538; Edward VI., 1551; Mary, Queen of Scots, 1571; English Commanders against the Spanish Armada, 1588; Queen Elizabeth, 1603; Charles I., 1642; Oliver Cromwell, 1649; Charles II., 1660; James, Duke of Monmouth, 1685; William III., 1689; James Stuart, the Pretender, 1703; John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, 1706; William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, 1759; George III., 1760; George Washington, 1793; Horatio, Viscount Nelson, and Emma, Lady Hamilton, 1805; Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington, 1815; General Charles George Gordon, 1884; Queen Victoria, 1885; John Dryden, 1682; Joseph Addison, 1714; S. T. Coleridge, 1815; William Wordsworth, 1834; John Keats, 1820; Charles Dickens, 1870; W. M. Thackeray, 1851; Thomas Carlyle, 1832; and Robert Browning, 1868.

Numerous collections of facsimiles have been published in England, France, and Germany, and the prudent collector must secure one or more of these invaluable aids to the identification of MSS. Most of the best catalogues issued, both in London and Paris, contain several facsimiles, but that does not lessen the utility of books like "Autographs of Royal, Noble, Learned, and Remarkable Personages conspicuous in English History from the Reign of Richard II. to that of Charles II., with some illustrious Foreigners; containing many passages from important letters" (engraved under the direction of Charles John Smith and John Gough Nichols: London, 1829, 1 vol. 4to); or "A Collection of One Hundred Characteristic and Interesting Autograph

Letters written by Royal and Distinguished Persons of Great Britain from the XV. to the XVIII. Century, copied in perfect facsimile from the originals by Joseph Nethercliff" (London, 1849). Several useful facsimiles are to be found in "A Guide to the Collector of Historical Documents, Literary MSS., and Autograph Letters," by the Rev. Dr. Scott and Mr. Samuel Davey, published in 1891. Dr. H. T. Scott is also responsible for a handy little volume, entitled "Autograph Collecting, a Practical Manual for Amateurs and Historical Students," brought out three years later than the larger volume by Mr. Upcott Gill.

It must be confessed, however, that our French neighbours are far ahead of us in the matter of facsimiles, as well as in other details connected with autograph collecting. With us the subject is only now beginning to receive the treatment it merits. In the opinion of our neighbours the cult of the autograph has for some generations held rank as a science. I cannot too strongly impress upon beginners the expediency of carefully watching the Paris autograph market, and giving special attention to the catalogues issued monthly by M. Noël Charavay, of 3, Rue Furstenberg, and Madame Veuve Gabriel Charavay, of 153, Faubourg St. Honoré. At the Fraser Sale (April, 1901) I purchased three huge volumes forming an extra-illustrated copy of a portion of the famous "Letters of Madame de Sévigné," compiled quite a century ago at the cost of several hundred pounds, and finally acquired by Miss Eliza Gulston. In it, in addition to an enormous number of prints and portraits, were several genuine autograph letters, supplemented by a large number of facsimiles. Under the genuine

letters the maker of the book wrote their source and history; he divided the facsimiles into "tracings," "imitations by hand," and so forth. A copy of the "Isographie des Hommes Célèbres," in two 4to volumes, is now worth between £3 and £4, and the late Mr. Étienne Charavay prepared two supplements to it which are also extremely valuable. Between March, 1888, and December, 1894, the late Mr. Davey published a quarterly journal—the *Archivist*—which bid fair to become as indispensable to the English collector as the *Amateur d'Autographes*, founded in the early "eighteen-forties" and now admirably edited by M. Noël Charavay, is to his French colleague. Every true lover of autographs must deplore its untimely end, and the young collector is indeed fortunate if he can obtain a set of it. In it Dr. Scott, who was from the first its principal contributor, places quite a mine of information at the disposal of his readers. I regard the two bound volumes of the *Archivist* in my possession as one of the most useful books of reference obtainable in the matter of autographs. In the forty odd volumes of the *Amateur d'Autographes*[1] the student will discover a liberal education, as far as his special subject is concerned, ready at hand. The Charavay Sale-catalogues are of great value in the matter of arrangement and description, as well as for the facsimiles they give in abundance. One of the finest is that of the Alfred Bovet Collection, dispersed

[1] Issued every month at a yearly subscription of 10 francs. The office is at 3, Rue de Furstenberg, Paris. Amongst M. Charavay's collaborators are M. Anatole France, of the French Academy, and M. George Cain, of the Musée Carnavalet. Each number contains one or more facsimiles and a list of sale prices.

during the spring and early summer of 1884. It was prepared by M. Étienne Charavay, and fills over 800 4to pages plentifully illustrated with sketches and numerous facsimiles. A very useful book for beginners who read French is "Les Autographes en France et le goût des Autographes en France et à l'étranger" (Paris, 1865), by M. de Lescure. It contains a useful list of the numerous books on autographs published up to that date, together with the various collections of facsimiles, many of which can now be picked up on the bookstalls by the side of the Seine or the adjoining streets for a few francs. As far back as 1820 the Maison Delpech commenced the publication of their various "Iconographies," of which the "Isographie des Hommes Célèbres" was the natural successor. There are one or two German books of facsimiles, like the "Album von Autographen" (Leipzig, 1849) and the "Sammlung histor: berühmter Autographen" (Stuttgart, 1846–47). There is also a collection of five hundred facsimiles, published in 1846 by F. Bogaerts. I do not, of course, pretend to provide my readers with a complete autographic bibliography, but amongst the works I have mentioned he will find all that is necessary to set about collecting in earnest, and without fear of making many initial blunders.

Having handled and carefully examined a number of genuine autographs and having, by the study of facsimiles, familiarised himself with the handwriting of many famous men and women, the collector in embryo may begin to buy, but it must be a case of *festina lente*. How cautiously he should proceed he will realise when, in the next chapter, I come to consider the critical question of autograph frauds and forgeries

All respectable autograph dealers are ready to guarantee any specimen they offer for sale, and to take it back if found to be "doubtful." It is from the careful reading of the catalogues[1] issued from time to time by dealers like Mr. Bernard Quaritch, of Grafton Street, Dr. Scott, of 69, Mill Lane, West Hampstead, Mr. W. V. Daniell, of 53, Mortimer Street, Messrs. Sotheran, of 37, Piccadilly, Messrs. Maggs, of 109, Strand, Messrs. Ellis, of 29, New Bond Street, and Messrs. Pearson, of Pall Mall Court, that one obtains an insight into the current value of autographs of every description. Mr. Frank Sabin, of 172, New Bond Street, does not, as a rule, issue catalogues, but he possesses one of the most valuable stocks of autographs in existence. His Thackeray, Civil War, and Nelson collections are alone worth many thousands of pounds. While this volume was going through the press Mr. Sabin paid the record sum of £8,650 for a collection of seventeenth-century MSS. relating to America belonging to Mr. R. W. Blathwayt. In the provinces autograph catalogues are published now and then by Mr. W. Brown, of Edinburgh, and Messrs. Simmons & Waters, of Leamington Spa. All these gentlemen will readily send their catalogues on application. I have already mentioned the two excellent catalogues issued monthly in Paris. That of M. Noël Charavay, entitled *Bulletin d'Autographs*, has appeared ever since 1847. The *Revue des Auto-*

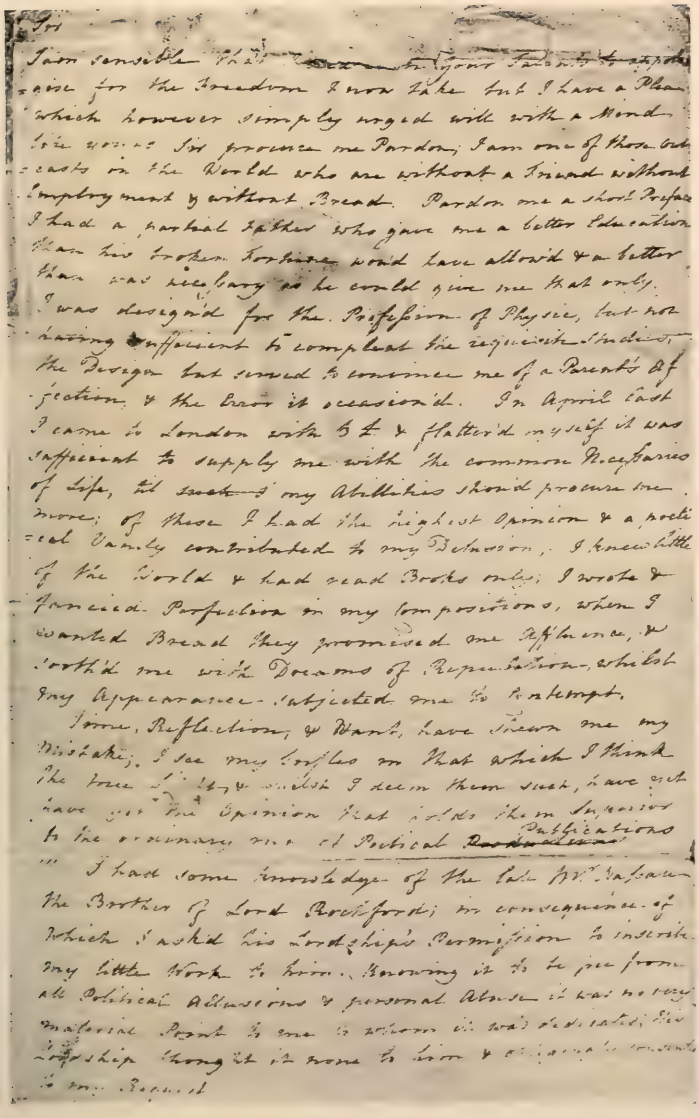
[1] The publisher of Autograph Catalogues invariably adopts the following convenient abbreviations: A. L. S. (autograph letter signed), A. L. (autograph letter unsigned), A. N. S. (autograph note signed), D. S. (document signed). In France L. A. S. indicates an autograph letter signed and P. S. (*pièce signée*) a signed document.

graphs of Madame Veuve Gabriel Charavay dates from 1866. It is only right to say that autograph collecting is pursued so keenly just now in France, that unless they can arrange to obtain advance copies of these catalogues, the best items in them will probably be sold before their order arrives. Catalogues are sometimes published by Herr Émile Hirsch, of 6, Carl Strasse, Munich. The American dealers will be spoken of in the chapter devoted to the subject of autograph collecting in the United States.

English autographs of exceptional interest are often obtained abroad at far lower prices than in London, and that fact makes it very necessary to look carefully through the foreign catalogues. The same remark doubtless applies to French and German autographs in England. I obtained in Germany a fine autograph letter of Charles I. for £10. It would have fetched three times that amount in a London auction-room. The same remark applies to a fine letter of the Young Pretender, which came from Paris and was priced only at 55 francs. On the other hand I obtained in London for 15s. each letters of Madame de Geoffrin and Madame du Deffand, which would have cost twice or thrice as much in Paris. In one of the latest French catalogues which reached me, an English letter was priced at 20 francs. In an English catalogue, a less lengthy letter by the same writer was offered for sale at £5. For 12 francs I once succeeded in purchasing in Paris a letter of Lord Shelbourne, covering ten pages and throwing quite new light on the relations between the French and English Courts at a certain epoch. The prices for fine autographs in London are far higher than in Paris and Germany.

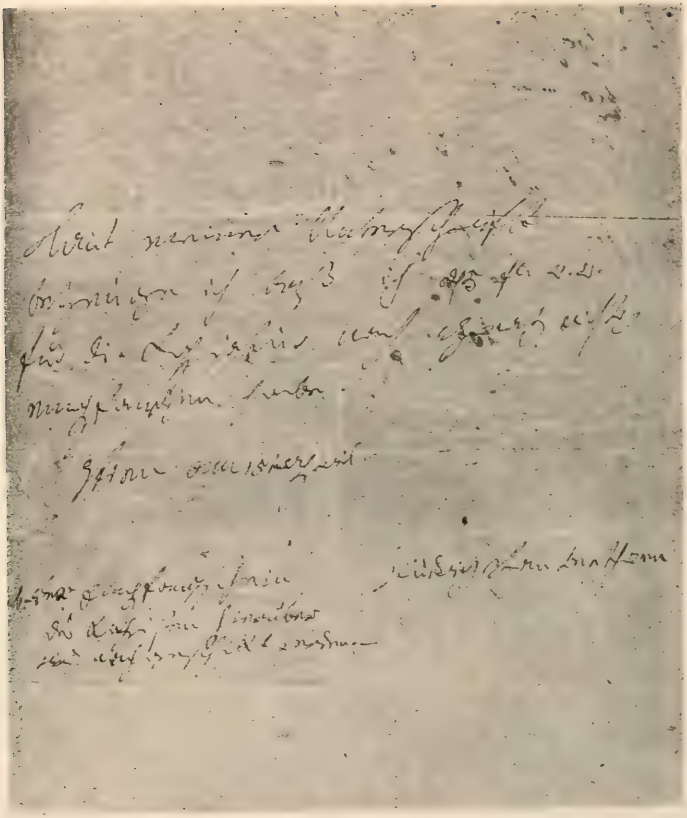
A Paris dealer could hardly realise the possibility of a Keats letter fetching £500 (12,500 francs), as at the Louis J. Haber sale. It was thought quite wonderful when a phenomenally early letter of Napoleon—I believe the earliest known—was sold for 5,000 francs. This figure is, I believe, the highest ever given in Paris for a single letter. In any case this unique relic of the young Napoleon only fetched about one-tenth of the price obtained for the Post Office Mauritius stamp which caused so much excitement in the philatelic world six years since.

In the case of MSS. of every description it is necessary to read them carefully. It is only by so doing that you can hope to ascertain anything like the real value. This remark applies particularly to holograph letters. The cataloguer often omits the name of the person to whom it is addressed, or some sentence or allusion which adds materially to its value. Thus a letter of Franklin addressed to Washington, or letters by any of the French marshals written to Napoleon, would be far more valuable than ordinary letters of any of these personages. A letter signed by the Russian Emperor Paul would not be intrinsically valuable. But one addressed to Nelson was lately priced at £14. The time at which a letter is written is often an important factor in determining its price. An ordinary letter of Wellington, who wrote at least a hundred thousand letters during his public career, can be bought for 3s. 6d. A note written on the evening of June 18, 1815, not long since realised £105. Then again, letters acquire additional value when forming part of a series. I purchased a letter of Sir Joshua Reynolds to the poet Crabbe, mentioning a communication he



FACSIMILE OF THE HISTORIC LETTER FROM GEORGE CRABBE TO EDMUND BURKE.

(See also p. 210.)



THE AUTOGRAPH OF LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN.

(See p. 257.)

was sending him for Dr. Johnson. Years after I secured the precious enclosure. The two together are obviously worth more than when taken singly. I possess the splendid letter of George Crabbe, appealing for help to Burke, which once belonged to Sir Theodore Martin. I failed to secure Burke's reply, which went, I believe, to the British Museum. I gave a few francs in Paris for a letter of Anne Damer's asking Madame de Staël to meet her at Miss Berry's (the friend and literary executrix of Walpole). Quite accidentally, in turning over a pile of autographs in London, I came across the reply, and a very characteristic one it was. At the present moment both letters face the account of the reunion in question in my extra-illustrated copy of "The Journals and Correspondence of Miss Berry."

Dr. Scott hopes I will impress upon my readers the necessity of mending autographs as little as possible. To clip or trim them is rank heresy, and gives them at once the appearance of counterfeits. Autographs must be treated with the greatest tenderness. You can best strengthen decaying paper by the careful application of diluted solution of gelatine. There are several methods of rendering faded writing again legible. According to one authority the most effective agent is very finely powdered chlorate of potash added to a decoction of galls, *dabbed*, not rubbed, over the MS. When dry, the surface should be sponged with lime-water. Another expert advises that the paper should be moistened, and a brush passed over the faded portion wetted with a solution of sulphide of ammonia, an infusion of galls, or a solution of ferrocyanide of potassium slightly acidulated with

hydrochloric acid.[1] Personally I have found the "A.P." brand of transparent adhesive tape invaluable both in mending and hinging autographs, but worthless imitations must be avoided. It can be bought of all stationers, and with it I always use Higgins's Photographic Paste. This may possibly be a little extravagant, and an expert gives me the following recipe for a useful paste in connection with autographs:—

"Take a tablespoonful of Glenfield's Patent Starch and mix with a little cold water in an ordinary jam-pot, then fill with boiling water. When cool it will be ready for use."

The classification of autographs has given rise to endless discussion. On this subject I am at issue with Mr. Joline. Personally, I regard extra-illustration as the most effective and interesting plan of arranging and preserving autographs. Mr. Joline, on the other hand, "meditates" upon extra-illustration as only an incident or contingent possibility in auto-

[1] Dr. Scott says: "Various suggestions have been offered for the restoration of vanished writing and of ink which has faded, such as a solution of sulphide of ammonium washed over the writing, previously moistened with water or a decoction of nut-galls, but great care must be exercised so as not to injure valuable documents. Indeed, I cannot too often repeat the warning that the less autographs are manipulated or altered from their original state the better. The way in which so many fine old letters have had their margins trimmed to remove the ragged edges years ago is a dreadful eye-sore to the collector, who, of course, likes to see the sheets of paper of the proper orthodox size, with large spaces around the writing. Damping the ink should, if possible, be carefully avoided, for there is something precious and inimitable in the fine, indescribable tint which age alone gives to writing."

graph collection. I hope to deal with (to me) the most fascinating subject of Extra-Illustration or Grangerising in a separate volume. In an article in *The Country Home* I have given examples of the effective use of autographs in extra-illustration,[1] and I can conceive no form of "the gentle emotion" more enjoyable than that which one experiences when one sees an appropriate autograph placed in apposition to a fine portrait facing some text which they combine strikingly and felicitously to illustrate. In my "Chesterfield's Letters" I have a letter in English from the Sage of Ferney to the Hermit of Blackheath, together with a portrait of the same date, opposite Chesterfield's account of his meeting with and friendship for Voltaire. In an "extended" Clarke and McArthur's "Life of Nelson," in immediate contiguity to the account of one of his most daring adventures, and the honours it brought him, may be seen Nelson's original letter of thanks to George III. (as touching an epistle as he ever penned), together with a contemporary portrait in water-colours. There is no better way of preserving autographs than to house them between the leaves of well-bound and carefully tended volumes. There is no worse method than to frame them as a picture, and expose them to the fading influence of a strong light. I have seen autographs actually gummed to a glass before being framed! If an accident occurs the autograph generally shares the fate of the glass. For the orderly keeping of the autographs and MSS. which I have not utilised in the forty or fifty books I have extra-illustrated since 1900, I employ a deep folio-sized receptacle known as a Stone's "filing"

[1] See *The Country Home*, vol. iv., February, 1910, pp. 254–58.

cabinet, with alphabetical divisions.[1] It enables me to find any given paper at a moment's notice.

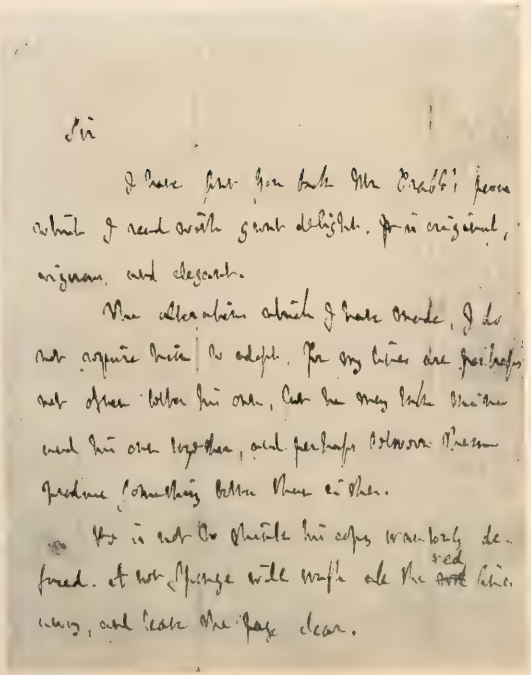
I have made the necessities of extra-illustration the mainspring, as it were, of my autograph collecting. If the young autograph collector has no specific object of this kind in view (and in the course of ten years' hard work in the vineyard of grangerising there are few kinds of autographs I have not required) I should strongly recommend him to begin with some specific line, be it soldiers or sailors, painters or poets, actors and actresses, men of letters, worthies of a particular city, county, or college, and so forth. If this course is adopted an interesting collection can be formed without incurring enormous cost, and the value of good autographs is sure to rise. It is given to few men in a generation, or even in a century, to form collections of a cosmopolitan and all-embracing character like that made by the late Mr. Alfred Morrison between the years 1865 and 1882, the catalogue of which, prepared with the utmost care by M. A. W Thibaudeau, fills six folio and seven imperial octavo volumes, and costs £60. French collectors pay great attention to classification, and each letter is generally placed in a *chemise* or cover bearing some heraldic or other appropriate device. In the case of a small collection like that which Sir George White, Bart., has acquired, of letters and documents relating solely to Bristol, an alphabetical arrangement is preferable. If, however, one gathers autographs of all conceivable kinds, and "of all nations and languages," subdivisions become absolutely essential

[1] Many varieties of these cabinets are obtainable at the establishment of Terry & Co., Ltd., wholesale stationers, Hatton Garden.

if you want to find any particular specimen without difficulty. I have already referred to the Alfred Bovet Catalogue, prepared on scientific lines by M. Étienne Charavay. In this collection the many thousand items of which it consisted were divided into—(1) Heads of Government; (2) Statesmen and Political Personages; (3) The French Revolution; (4) Warriors; (5) Men of Science and Explorers; (6) Actors and Actresses; (7) Writers; (8) Painters, Sculptors, Engravers, and Architects; (9) Huguenots; and (10) Women. There was a further subdivision according to nationalities, and these were finally arranged chronologically. The preface to the Bovet Catalogue, admirably written by M. Étienne Charavay, has been published separately under the attractive title of "The Science of Autographs." It deserves to be translated and published in English, for no more thoughtful essay on the value of historical letters and the cult of the autograph has ever appeared. It is now time to consider the application of the legal maxim of *caveat emptor* to the acquisition of MSS. of every description. The presence of a forgery will often discredit an otherwise interesting and valuable collection. Not long ago I was shown an album of autographs which represented the gleanings of two or three generations of a highly respectable county family. The moment I opened it I recognised my old friend the Byron-Galignani facsimile, which is offered to dealers as a rare specimen at least once a week. The owner, who had paid several pounds for it, declared he could vouch for its genuineness beyond the shadow of a doubt! He never quite forgave my taking down the Paris edition of Byron's poems to convince him of his error.

III

THE *CAVEAT EMPTOR* OF AUTOGRAPH COLLECTING



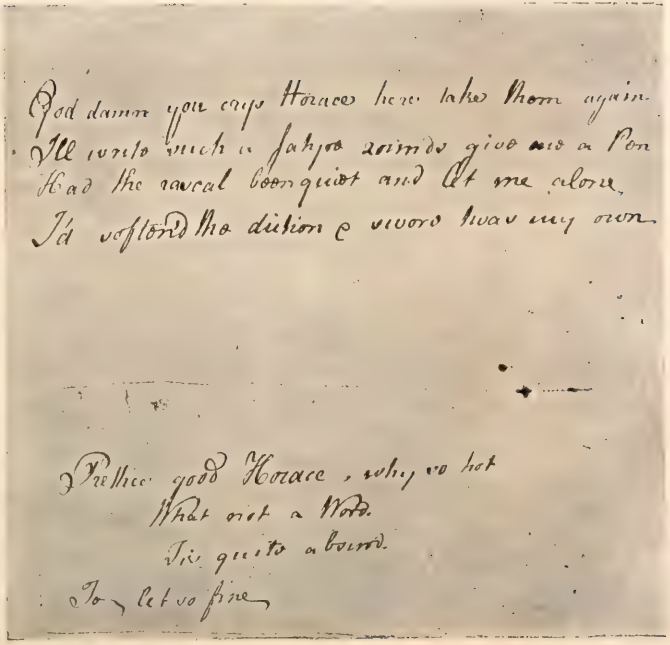
Sir

I have sent you back Mr Crabb's poem which I read with great delight. It is original, vigorous, and elegant.

The alterations which I have made, I do not require him to adopt. For my lines are perhaps not often better his own, but he may take mine and his own together, and perhaps between them produce something better than either.

He is not to think his copy wantonly defaced. A wet sponge will wash all the red lines away, and leave the page clear.

FIRST PAGE OF A.L.S. OF DR. JOHNSON TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS ON THE SUBJECT OF CRABBE'S POEMS, 1783.



God damn you cry Horace here take them again.
I'll write such a satyre 2 winds give me a Pen
Had the rascal been quiet and let me alone
I'd soften'd the diction & swore twas my own

Prettie good Horace, why so hot
What not a Word.
Tis quite absurd.
To let so fine

LINES OF THOMAS CHATTERTON ON HORACE WALPOLE, WHICH COST SIR GEORGE WHITE, OF BRISTOL, £34.

CHAPTER III

THE *CAVEAT EMPTOR* OF AUTOGRAPH COLLECTING

Forgeries and fakes—Cases of mistaken identity—Some famous autograph frauds — Practical methods of detection

The success of an imposture depends chiefly upon the receptive disposition of those who are selected as its victims.—*Introduction to* "Ireland's Confessions."

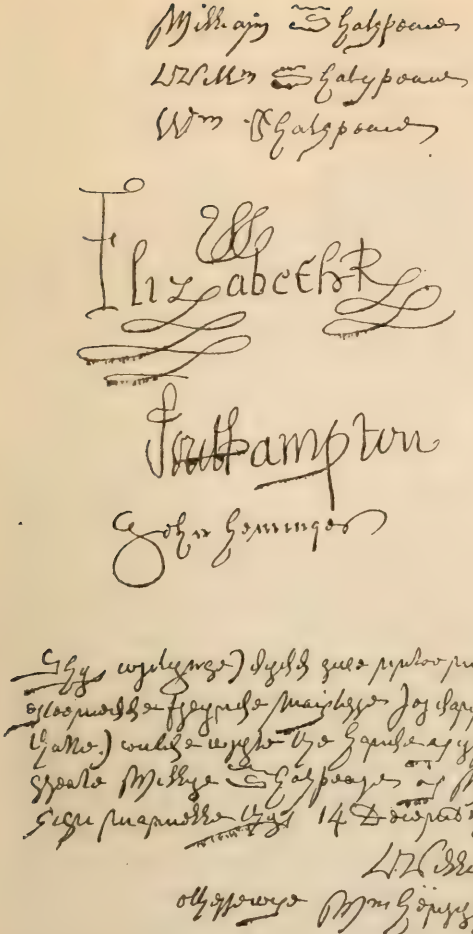
Oui, il y a de faux autographes, comme il y a de faux antiques. Mais est-ce-qu'on devra supprimer le musée des antiques parce qu'on a découvert de faux bronzes.—ÉTIENNE CHARAVAY, "L'Affaire Vrain-Lucas."

I MUST resist a strong temptation to enlarge on such interesting topics as W. H. Ireland's wholesale manufacture of Shakespearean MSS.; Thomas Chatterton's ingenious fabrication of Rowley's poems, and James Macpherson's alleged translations from Ossian. The main object of Ireland and Chatterton was obviously to deceive the world of letters rather than the then little-known autograph collector with whose interests I am solely concerned. By the irony of fate, however, there are at the present moment very few rarer or more costly autographs than that of Thomas Chatterton, who might very well have lived for a twelvemonth on the price paid

by Sir George White for four or five lines of his handwriting scrawled on the back of a letter. Chatterton died by his own hand, with starvation staring him in the face, but Ireland lived to make money by the "Confessions"[1] of his misdoings, and more than thirty years ago £50 was paid for the scathing letter addressed to Macpherson by Samuel Johnson. The forger of autograph letters for the purpose of entrapping the over-trustful or ignorant collector is the product of the nineteenth century, although some of the French imitations may possibly be a little older. The modern forger obtains important aid from photography, but by way of compensation the enlargement of any given specimen by the same means is invaluable for the purposes of detection. The earliest imitations of autograph letters I have ever seen are of French origin, and are contained in the extra-illustrated copy of Madame de Sévigné's Letters already alluded to. They are frankly labelled as "tracings," "engravings," "lithographs," and so forth, and many of them seem to have been executed on old paper in order to simulate more completely the originals.

The inexperienced collector must, in the first instance, beware of facsimiles of letters which have been published *bonâ fide* as illustrations of works of biography, and, having been extracted from them, are offered for sale (sometimes innocently) as genuine specimens. The most familiar instance of this is a letter of Byron's addressed to "Mr. Galignani, at

[1] Editions of Ireland's "Confessions" appeared both in England and America. My own copy is entitled "The Confessions of William Henry Ireland. A New Edition with an introduction by Richard Grant White" (New York, 1874).



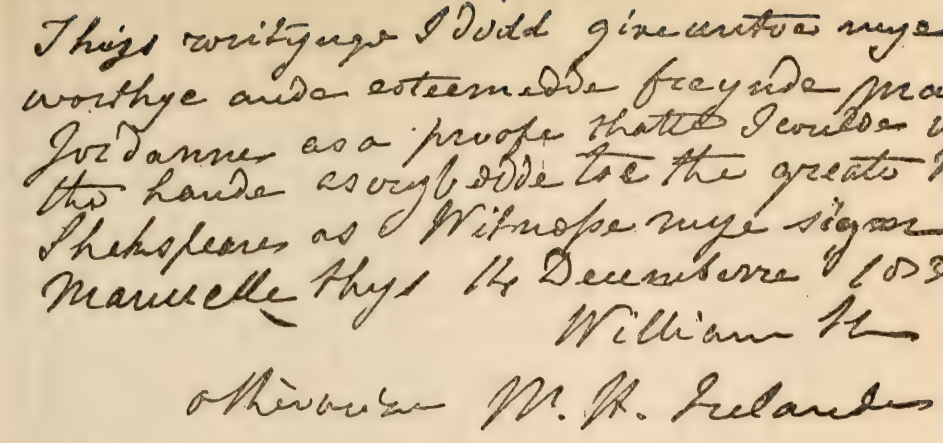
A SPECIMEN OF IRELAND'S SHAKESPEAREAN FORGERIES ATTESTED BY HIMSELF

(By permission of the owners, Messrs. Sotheran.)

18, Rue Vivienne, Paris." A facsimile of this, with address, &c., was prefixed to an edition of Byron's poems published in Paris. Not long ago I saw this lithographed facsimile figuring as genuine in a valuable collection of holograph letters, the rest of which were above suspicion.

This letter commences with the words:—

"Sir,—In various numbers of your journal I have seen mentioned a work entitled 'The Vampire' with the addition of my name as that of the author. I am not the author, and never heard of the work in question until now," and ends with the sentence, "You will oblige me by complying with my request of contradiction. I assure you that I know nothing of the work or works in question, and have the honour to be (as the correspondents to magazines say), 'your constant reader' and very obedient servant, Byron." To this is added the date, "Venice, April 27th, 1819." There is a well-known facsimile of a letter of Lord Nelson which occasionally does duty as an original. Some years ago I saw it in a catalogue priced at several pounds! It is inserted after the preface in T. O. Churchill's "Life of Nelson," published in 1808, and the paper is therefore not unlike that of the period at which the letter is supposed to have been written, and bears on the back the address, "To Thomas Lloyd, Esq., No. 15, Mary's Buildings, St. Martin's Lane, London." The original would be worth quite ten guineas. Buyers of Nelson letters should remember that this dangerous facsimile begins as follows: "Bath, January 29th, 1798. My dear Lloyd,—There is nothing you can desire me to do that I shall not have the greatest pleasure in complying with, for I am sure you can never possess a



WILLIAM IRELAND'S ATTESTATION OF HIS FORGERIES OF SHAKESPEARE'S SIGNATURE.

thought that is not strictly honourable. I was much flattered by the Marquis's [1] kind notice of me, and I beg you will make my respects acceptable to him. Tell him that I possess his place in Mr. Palmer's Box, but his Lordship did not tell me all its charms, that generally some of the handsomest Ladys at Bath are partakers in the Box, and was I a bachelor I would not answer for being tempted, but as I am possessed of everything that is valuable in a wife I have no occasion to think beyond a pretty face"—and so forth.

If either of these facsimiles had been touched with the end of a sable brush moistened with muriatic acid and water the print would remain unaffected. In a genuine letter the writing if so touched would grow faint or disappear. The same test may be applied to photographs or imitations in sepia. I once purchased a quaint note written by Edmund Kean, of which a reproduction is now given. Nearly a year later I saw an autograph, identical in every particular, offered for sale. I sent for it, and on applying the dilution of muriatic acid test found it to be a copy in sepia of the note already in my possession. The owner of the genuine note had sent it to two or three applicants for inspection. It had been traced over and then worked up in sepia. I once discovered a letter of William Pitt the Elder to be a forgery by the mere accident of the sun falling on it, and showing a narrow rim round each letter. In this case the basis was a photograph, touched up with black paint.

The autograph collector soon becomes accustomed to the appearance of genuine letters, for the creases and stains of time cannot be perfectly imitated any

[1] Marquis of Lansdowne.

more than the old-world appearance of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century ink. Watermarks are a good, but not an infallible, test of genuineness. The thick, gilt-edged letter paper of quarto size used by our ancestors cannot be satisfactorily counterfeited, and the inexperienced buyer should eschew documents of all sorts written on morsels of paper of irregular size, which may have been torn from books, and lack the usual tests of authenticity. Collectors of autographs should bear in mind the facts that "franks" ceased to be used after the introduction of the penny postage in 1840; that envelopes were first used about ten years earlier, and that the letters denoting the various London postal districts did not form part of the postmark till some time after the invention of the adhesive stamp. A forged letter of Thackeray was detected by the appearance of the letter W. after London in the counterfeit postmark quite ten years before it could have legitimately done so. If hot water is applied to a genuine watermark, it becomes clearer and stronger; if to a fabricated one it disappears. The autograph collector should carefully study a book which has quite recently been published on the subject of forgery and fabricated documents.[1] One chapter is devoted to the subject of forged literary autographs, but those who desire to acquire an expert nowledge of this important question should master the whole of its contents, and this is no difficult task, for the volume only contains seventy-seven pages. In proportion to the constant rise in the value of autographs the temptation to forgery increases, and the gradual absorption of

[1] "The Detection of Forgery." A Practical Handbook, by Douglas Blackburn and Captain Waithman Caddell (London, 1909).

genuine specimens is sure to bring into existence a number of shams. As the authors very rightly point out, "It is not surprising the profitable and growing autograph market should have attracted the fraudulent, for the prizes when won are generally of a substantial character, and amply repay the misapplied effort and ingenuity demanded. The success which has attended too many of these frauds may be largely accounted for by the fact that in many cases the enthusiasm of the collector has outrun his caution."

The letters of Washington, Franklin, Burns, Nelson, Byron, Keats, Shelley, and Scott were the first to attract the attention of the autograph forger in England. Thackeray and Dickens have been recently the object of his unwelcome attentions. Most of the Thackeray forgeries, like the example reproduced, are the work of one man, who uses an ordinary pen and has a fondness for half-sheets of paper. His feeble attempts to imitate Thackeray's wit and style are alone sufficient to excite suspicion. If the counterfeit is carefully compared with a genuine specimen like the one given, deception will be impossible. I possess a small collection of forged autograph letters to use for detective purposes, and as a warning to others. There are five of these "duffer" Thackerays amongst them. The forger apparently finds the upright hand Thackeray adopted later in life more to his taste than the less angular calligraphy of his youth. A few years ago the London autograph market was inundated with forged letters of Thackeray and Dickens. At present they are kept out of the light of day, and sold to the unwary in all sorts of out-of-the-way places, often in shops at the sea-side. The Dickens

Onslow Square
August 14th.

My dear James

I have been very busy and far from well, and time has flown more quickly than I supposed. And that is really the fact.

I have looked over your "Poem", and am sorry to think of the time you have wasted. Honestly, I cannot give you any encouragement to go on. You can't, believe me, make yourself a poet. In time, it is true, you might put forth very tolerable verse, but certainly not poetry. Stick to your desk, my lad, for the present at any rate. And throw over your poetical aspirations: they (if you persist in retaining them) will bring you nothing but chagrin and disappointment.

Always yours sincerely
W M Thackeray

FORGED LETTER OF W. M. THACKERAY, IN WHICH HIS LATER HANDWRITING IS IMITATED.

forgeries are generally betrayed by the printed address at the top of the letter being lithographed and not embossed. The gentleman to whom Dickens is said to have addressed his last letter is supposed to have had a certain number of facsimiles made for distribution amongst his friends. These are now used occasionally like the Galignani-Byron or the Churchill-Nelson. It is here a clear case of *caveat emptor.*

Very often a letter is offered for sale which is in no sense of the word a forgery, but which was never written by the person the buyer supposes. In nine cases out of ten the seller is as ignorant of the true state of the case as the buyer. I allude to letters written by persons bearing the same name, but whose autographs possess a very different value. In addition to the kings and queens whose names are identical, we have two Oliver Cromwells, two Horace Walpoles, two Sarah Siddonses, two Charles Dickenses, and many other "doubles." I have within the last few months seen a letter of the less-known Horace Walpole catalogued as one of the owner of Strawberry Hill, and a letter of Sarah Siddons the younger, whose usual signature is "S. M. Siddons," described as a "long and pleasing" specimen in the handwriting of her mother. In these cases there is no sort of resemblance in the calligraphy of the two persons. The error arises solely from the similarity of the name, and a lack of care or knowledge on the part of the cataloguer. As a matter of fact, the letter of Sarah Martha Siddons is an exceedingly interesting one, and was written about two years before her death under the tragic circumstances graphically described by Mr. Knapp in his "Artist's Love Story." I never saw any other letter of Sarah M. Siddons,

and I give it *in extenso* to show how careful one should be in studying an autograph before purchasing it. It should be remembered that "Sally" Siddons promised her younger sister Maria, who died in 1798 at Bristol Hot Wells "all for the love" of the handsome painter, that under no circumstances would she ever marry him. The letter gives a striking picture of the Kemble-Siddons "circle" at Bath in the first year of the nineteenth century.

Miss Sarah M. Siddons at Bath to Miss Patty Wilkinson,[1] *Blake Street, York.*

BATH, *July* 19, 1801.

Indeed my dear Patty I am extremely concerned to hear of your mother's serious illness which you may believe is not a little augmented by the necessity I cannot but feel there is, for your staying with her if she does not soon get the better of this alarming attack, but you know my dear I am by nature (*and heartily do I thank nature for it*) dispos'd to see the fairest side of things, and I am flattering myself with the hopes that your next letter will bring me good tidings, and that I shall see my dear Patty arrive with my Mother [2] at Bath in less now than a fortnight. Heaven be prais'd, *if I should but be well* to receive you both, it will be one of the happiest days of my life. Did I tell you how sociable we all were while my uncle and Mrs. Kemble [3] were in Bath? dining every day together, either at our own or the Twiss's house. I never saw my Uncle so cheerful and like other people, and she was quite agreeable and did not overwhelm us with Lords, Ladies,

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[1] The daughter of Tate Wilkinson, of York, the "Wandering Patentee." Miss Patty Wilkinson eventually became the companion of Mrs. Siddons, and lived with her till her death.

[2] Mr. Siddons was now a resident at Bath, and his wife frequently joined him there whenever her professional duties allowed of her doing so.

[3] J. P. Kemble was playing at the Orchard Street Theatre in the early summer of 1801.

Balls and Suppers. Mrs. Twiss[1] too is become quite kind, nay *affectionate* to me *since I got well*, but *one smile, one tender word, or attention* has more effect on me when I am ill and miserable than all the kindness and attention I can meet with, when I am well, and able (at least in some degree) to return pleasure for pleasure. I have heard Betty Sharp sing several times, and think she is very much improved in manner and I hope her voice will improve in power, at present it is often too weak to have much effect in a large room, crowded with people. She is good humour'd and unaffected as far as I have seen her, and her person as I told you before improv'd most astonishingly. While my uncle and Mrs. Kemble were here, we spent an evening at Mrs. Palmer's[2] which was rather dull, and one at Miss Lee's[3] which was a little better. I am sure they both would have been very tiresome to me if it had not been for *my own people*. Pray remember me very kindly to poor Mrs. Wilkinson, who is I hope recovering every day—and to your friend Miss Brook. I should like to see Cora in all her glory. I present by you a salute to her Ladyship's divine parts. George[4] will still be with us when you come. Cecy[5] will be gone to school and it is almost time she should, for she is got so riotous nobody can manage her when I am not in the way, for Patty is too good natured . . . and tho' she continually threatens to tell me, she never does and Cecilia knows she never will. Adieu my dear girl. I shall hear from you surely in a day or two, till when, I am impatiently

Your ever sincere and affectionate

S. M. Siddons.

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[1] A married sister of Mrs. Siddons, who also resided in Bath. The mother of Horace Twiss.

[2] The wife of the Lessee of the Bath Theatre and Director of Posts.

[3] The well-known Sisters Lee kept a school in Bath.

[4] George Siddons subsequently received an Indian cadetship from the Prince Regent, and survived his mother.

[5] Cecilia Siddons—Mrs. Siddons' youngest daughter. Mrs. Piozzi was her godmother. Lawrence's crayon drawing of Cecilia Siddons is now in possession of Lady Seymour, 31, Eccleston Street. Cecilia Siddons also survived her mother.

Of the forged letters in my private "pillory" that of Keats is by far the most cleverly executed. The facsimiles of Byron and Nelson were never intended to be used for the purposes of deception. The Keats and Thackeray counterfeits, on the other hand, are the work of a professional fabricator of spurious autographs. In the Keats letters (dated Wentworth Place, Hampstead, December 8, 1818) the postmarks, the creases, the faded colour of the paper, and the seal with the clasped hands and motto are all carefully imitated, but it would not for a moment deceive an experienced hand. Collectors should carefully examine all Keats letters offered for sale—particularly those addressed to "My dear Woodhouse." The same remark applies to correspondence by Burns, Scott, Shelley, and Byron, for those much-prized and eagerly-sought-after letters have been each in turn the subject of ingenious and carefully prepared forgeries. The Byron forger (who claimed relationship with the poet) escaped the punishment he richly merited, but the wholesale manufacturer of Burns and Scott MSS. was sent to jail for a twelvemonth.

The most extraordinary case in the annals of autograph forgery occurred in France—the country *par excellence* of cunningly devised facsimiles—on the eve of the Franco-Prussian War. It is known as the *Affaire Vrain-Lucas*, and an excellent account of it was published at the time by M. Étienne Charavay.[1] Vrain-Lucas was a

[1] "Faux Autographes. Affaire Vrain-Lucas. Étude Critique sur la Collection Vendue à Mons. Michel Chasles et Observations sur les moyens de reconnaître les Faux Autographes," par Étienne Charavay. (Paris: Librairie Jacques Charavay Aîné, 1870.)

needy adventurer; Michel Chasles was a scientist of European reputation. Incredible as it may appear, Vrain-Lucas, in the course of a few years, induced one Chasles to purchase from him at the aggregate price of about £6,000 no less than 27,000 autographs, nearly the whole of which were forgeries of the most audacious description. Vrain-Lucas bestowed on his counterfeits little of the care and attention to detail which characterises some of the Keats, Byron, Shelley, and Scott forgeries. Beginning with a supposed correspondence between the youthful Newton and Pascal, which Sir David Brewster proved conclusively to be impossible, he proceeded to fabricate letters of Rabelais, Montesquieu, and La Bruyère. Before he had finished M. Chasles became the possessor of letters *in French* and written on *paper made in France* of Julius Cæsar, Cleopatra, Mary Magdalene, and even of Lazarus, after his resurrection. On February 16, 1870, Vrain-Lucas was brought before a Paris Criminal Court (*Tribunal Correctionnel*). Amongst the forged MSS. produced on behalf of the prosecution were 5 letters of Abélard, 5 from Alcibiades to Pericles, 181 of Alcuin, 1 of Attila to a Gallic general, 6 of Alexander the Great to Aristotle, to say nothing of examples of the private correspondence of Herod, Pompey, Charles Martel, Judas Iscariot, Mary Magdalene, Sapho, Pontius Pilate, and Joan of Arc. Another long alphabetical list of these fictitious *rariora* began with Agnès Sorel, Anacreon, and the Emperor Adrian, and ended with St. Theresa, Tiberius, Turenne, and Voltaire.

Here is a delicious example of this farrago of transparent fraud.

Letter of Queen Cleopatra to Julius Cæsar.

Cléopatre royne à son très amé Jules César, Empereur.

Mon très amé, nostre fils Césarion va bien. J'espère que bientôt il sera en estat de supporter le voyage d'icyà Marseilles, où j'ai besoin de le faire instruire tant à cause de bon air qu'on y respire et des belles choses qu'on y enseigne. Je vous prins donc me dire combien de temps encore resterez dans ces contrées, car j'y veux conduire moy même nostre fils et vous prier par icelle occasion. C'est vous dire mon très amé le contentement que je ressens lorsque je me trouve près de vous, et ce attendant, je prins les dieux avoir vous en consideration. Le xi Mars l'an de Rome VCCIX. (!)

And next came a safe-conduct pass written by Vercingetorix in favour of "the young Trogus Pompeus on a secret mission to Julius Cæsar"! Vrain-Lucas was promptly sentenced to two years' imprisonment for fraud, together with a fine of 500 francs and the costs of the trial. The only excuse for M. Michel Chasles, mathematician of renown and Member of the Academy of Sciences, is to be found in his numerous preoccupations and advanced age. He was seventy-six in 1870.

In England the *Affaire Vrain-Lucas* has to some extent its counterpart in the literary forgery carried out with consummate skill by Dr. Constantine Simonides, who managed to deceive that too ardent collector, Sir Thomas Phillipps, with such tempting rarities from a monastery on Mount Athos as part of the original Gospel of St. Matthew, the Proverbs of Pythagoras, or a copy of Homer written on serpent's skin. But enough has been said of these literary frauds.

There is, however, one more class of forged autographs. I refer to letters fabricated in order to injure another, or in furtherance of some political

object. The Parnell letters, forged twenty years ago by Richard Pigott, belonged to this class, but they raised many of the questions which belong to forgeries of autographs. I was lately shown a forged letter of Napoleon III., supposed to have been written in 1848, which had evidently been fabricated many years later, possibly in 1865, in order to discredit him when the Second Empire began to lose its popularity. According to the document he had ordered the assassination of some associate suspected of treason. Not only was the imitation of the calligraphy of Napoleon III. faulty in many respects, but the signature, "Napoleon Bonaparte," at once betrayed the falsity of the document. It was, curiously enough, enclosed in an official envelope of Prince Jérôme Bonaparte's addressed to Jules Favre!

The best-known dealers in autographs always guarantee what they sell, and will readily take back any doubtful specimen. In the early stage of autograph collecting it is a manifest advantage to confine one's transactions to men of this class. Whenever the origin of an autograph is suspicious or mysterious, it is always safest to obtain expert opinion. As M. Charavay points out in dealing with the *Affaire Vrain-Lucas*, the question of the source from which an article comes is often of capital importance. Never omit to read carefully any given letter, and consider it from an historical point of view, as well as a mere specimen of handwriting. If M. Michel Chasles had done this he would have saved his 140,000 francs. If the first Newton letter he purchased had been submitted to the historical test, he would have discovered that at the time the philosopher was supposed to

discuss problems of the greatest abstruseness he was only three years old. It was on this deal that Vrain-Lucas built up his mountain of successful fraud. Bear in mind all that has been said of watermarks, postmarks, the shape and quality of paper, &c. Avoid notes written on scraps of paper and ragged half-sheets. If you suspect a letter to be a facsimile of some sort, touch the writing gently with diluted muriatic acid. Forgeries effected by the use of water-colour paint yield at once to the application of hot water. As yet the application of the useful maxim of *caveat emptor* is only necessary in the case of comparatively rare autographs. Letters of no great intrinsic value have as yet not proved remunerative to the forger, but it by no means follows that this will always remain so.

IV

SOME FAMOUS AUTOGRAPH "FINDS"

CHAPTER IV

SOME FAMOUS AUTOGRAPH "FINDS"

Personal reminiscences and experiences

No pursuit is more exciting than that of Autographs.—*The Archivist,* 1888.

IF autograph collecting is, as Mr. Joline defines it, "one of the gentlest of emotions," it certainly gives its votaries occasional moments of harmless excitement. Many of my readers will doubtless remember the faded handwriting on the battledores of our childhood, which, it may be presumed, represented the periodical clearings-out of lawyers' offices; but it requires a considerable stretch of the imagination to credit the presence of a portion of one of the copies of the Magna Charta on a drum-head, although the anecdote finds its place in all autograph handbooks. Ample evidence, however, exists of the strong natural affinity which once existed between ancient documents and the callings of the grocer and the fishmonger, but the use for old paper in this connection has almost entirely gone out of fashion, and the greater part of the discarded MSS. go straight to the pulp-mills for the purposes of reconversion. I will not attempt to disguise my

envy of the pleasurable sensations Dr. Raffles must have experienced when he picked up the original account of the expenses incurred at the execution of Mary Queen of Scots, duly attested by Burleigh, for eighteenpence at a book-stall on Holborn Hill. Almost equally lucky was the discoverer, on a printing-house file at Wrexham, of the MS. of Bishop Heber's famous missionary hymn, which not very long ago fetched forty guineas at Sotheby's; and still more so the traveller who reclaimed the whole of the forty years' correspondence between James Boswell and the Rev. W. J. Temple from the proprietor of a Boulogne fish-shop.

As the value of autographs becomes more and more widely known, and the search for them becomes keener, chances of important "finds" become rarer, but the possibilities of this kind of treasure-trove are by no means exhausted. English MSS. of great interest and value continually come to light abroad. Letters of the early Reformers often turn up in Holland. Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester, sent the whole of his MSS. to his friend Bullinger, and as yet only a single letter of Tyndall has ever come to light. Others, in all human probability, are hidden away in the *bahuts* and presses of the Low Countries, where letters of the Duke of Marlborough are not unfrequently offered for sale. Fine Stuart autographs constantly turn up both in Germany and Rome. It was in the Eternal City that the priceless MSS. of Cardinal York were offered for sale at the modest price of £20. The English collector *cannot too carefully examine the catalogues regularly issued by foreign dealers.* I have already alluded to my discovery of the marriage settlement of Pamela FitzGerald and the sixteenth-

century deed relating to a French commission for the colonisation of Canada. It was in a Paris price-list that I came across the following extraordinary letter of Sir Humphry Davy on the subject of his quarrel with George Stephenson:—

Sir Humphry Davy to John Buddle, Esq., Wallsend, Newcastle.

LONDON, *February* 8, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Newman appears dilatory and has not yet made the apparatus to my mind; but I hope soon to send it you and to give you your *new right*. I hope no one will try expts with platinum in explosive atmospheres till my paper is published for if *fine wire* is used and suffered to *hang out* of the lamp so as to ignite to whiteness in the *external* air explosion will follow; but by the most simple precaution security is absolute. Stevenson's Pamphlet has proved to the satisfaction of every person who has looked at it in London, that he *endeavoured* to steal from what he had heard of my researches, safety tubes and apertures: no one could have established his piracy so effectively as himself.

It is stated in one of these malignant advertisements which are below my contempt that I was in the coal district in the end of September 1815. Whereas I left it two days after I saw you at Wallsend which I think was the 23rd or 24th of August and went to Bishop Auckland where I stayed only three days and I spent the greater part of the month of September with Lord Harewood and was in London working in my Laboratory early in October and had discovered several apertures and tubes in the middle of last month whilst Mr. Stevenson's absurd idea of *admitting Hydrogen* in undetached portions by a slider was fermenting in his mind. I certainly never thought of employing *capilliary* [*sic*] tubes. My tubes were merely *safe* tubes for I knew perfectly well and have proved by expts that no lamp could be fed on air through real capilliary tubes. To make a lamp that will burn on three capilliary tubes is as impossible as to make it burn in a closed decanter. Stevenson's capilliary tubes are evidently stolen from what Mr. Hodgson communicated early in November of my small safe tubes and made capilliary to suit Mr. Brand-

lings marvellous discovery that wire gauze is the extremity of capilliary tubes.

I am my dear Sir,
Very sincerely yours,
H. DAVY.

A specimen of an advertisement suited to Mr. W. Brandling.

Aladdin should sign his name *Assassin* for he endeavours to stab in the dark. An assassin is a proper associate for a private purloiner. One may attempt to murder while the other carries off the plunder. Mr. W. J. Brandling must be ashamed of such friends as Aladdin and Fair play, at least he cannot wish to be seen in public with them even though he should love them as dearly as *himself*. TRUTH.

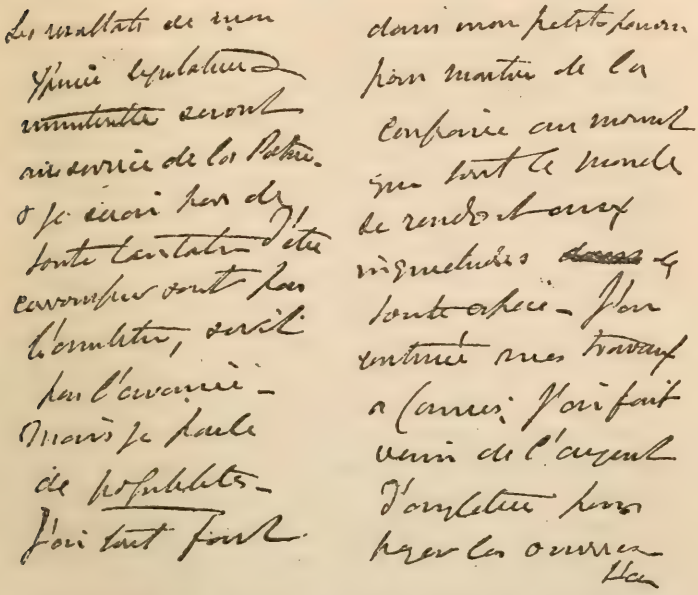
One suited to Stevenson.

Mr. George Stevenson has changed his note from capilliary tubes to small tubes. No one can doubt that he pilfered these from Mr. Hodgson's communication of Sir H. Davy's discoveries. His original principle to admit Hydrogen in small detached portions (detached by a slider) is now kept out of sight. A man who in the face of the whole world and in open day light steals the *safety trimmer* and a safe *top* in Killingworth Colliery and in the dark may endeavour to steal safety apertures and tubes. But does he now know what is a safe aperture? Let those people who use his lamp, his capilliary tube lamp, look to themselves. VINDEX.

It is fit that great ingratitude and little malevolence should be united in the same cause, fortunately in this case they are associated with great ignorance.

From the same source came the correspondence between Lord Brougham and his friend Arago, in the course of which the ex-Chancellor of Great Britain proposed to abandon his own nationality, and, if elected, take his seat in the French Assembly.

There is scarcely a country house or muniment-room in England which may not afford a happy hunting-ground to the collector. It is only quite lately missing originals of the Paston Letters (lost ever since 1789) were recovered in the library of the descendants of Pitt's friend and literary executor,



TWO PAGES OF A LETTER BY LORD BROUGHAM TO E. ARAGO, OFFERING TO BECOME A NATURALISED FRENCHMAN AND A CANDIDATE FOR THE FRENCH CHAMBERS.

Bishop Pretyman-Tomline. Although Moore, Murray, and Hobhouse burned one copy of Byron's MS. autobiography in 1824, a duplicate is supposed to be in existence, but its present whereabouts is unknown. In a quiet corner of the Harcourt Library at Nuneham, Whitelock's MS. was found quite unexpectedly, and

Burckhardt's journal of the Euphrates Expedition of 1811, and the MSS. of William Oldys are still missing. A bundle of genuine Keats letters was disinterred at Melbourne, and the letters of the Rev. George Crabbe to Miss Elizabeth Charter, now in my possession, sojourned for many years in the Antipodes.

Within the last half-century letters of Addison, Prior, and Mordaunt Earl of Peterborough, and other MSS. of great value, were saved from imminent destruction in a manor house, near Llangollen.

It was only seventy years ago that a dealer in Hungerford Market, named Jay, purchased at £7 a ton a large accumulation of "waste-paper" from the Somerset House authorities. By the merest accident it transpired that amongst the MSS. thus unceremoniously treated were Exchequer Office Accounts of the reign of Henry VII., Secret Service Accounts signed by Eleanor Gwynne, and Wardrobe Accounts of Queen Elizabeth. Several bundles of parchments were sold by Jay to a Fleet Street confectioner, and turned into jelly, before any suspicion arose as to their possible value or importance. It was seventeen years later than this, in 1857, that three hundred tons of papers, including the records of the Indian Navy, went from the old India House to the paper-mill. Comparatively few of the Jay MSS. were recovered, for three tons of paper which remained untouched were accidentally burned.

There is no more picturesque incident in the annals of literary discovery than Sir H. Maxwell Lyle's account of his "find" in a loft at Belvoir, the clue to which was afforded by a faded label on a

rusty key. "The disturbance of the surface," we are told, "caused a horrible stench, and it soon became evident that the loft had been tenanted by rats, who had done lasting damage to valuable MSS. by gnawing and staining them. Some documents had been reduced to powder, others had lost their dates or their signatures. The entire centre of a long letter in the hand of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, had entirely disappeared. Those that remained were of a very varied character. A deed of the time of Henry II. was found among some granary accounts of the eighteenth century, and gossiping letters of the Court of Elizabeth among modern vouchers. Letters to Henry Vernon of Haddon from the Duke of Clarence, the Earl of Warwick, and Kings Edward IV., Richard III., and Henry VII., written on paper and folded very small, lay hidden between large leases engrossed on thick parchment."

The loft at Belvoir is certainly not the only place in the United Kingdom where autographic treasure-trove lies hid, and no opportunity should be missed of turning over collections of MSS., when the occasion presents itself. Some five years ago an entry in one of the catalogues of Mr. B. Dobell, of 77, Charing Cross Road, led me to become the possessor of the holograph project for the Defence of England drawn up in 1803–5 by General Dumouriez, on behalf of the last Pitt Administration. The MS. covers nearly four hundred pages, and is carefully bound in white vellum. Every page of it is in Dumouriez's handwriting. From first to last the work done by Dumouriez cost the Government quite £20,000. Only fragments of the scheme exist in the archives of the War Office. This book contains the

Conclusion.

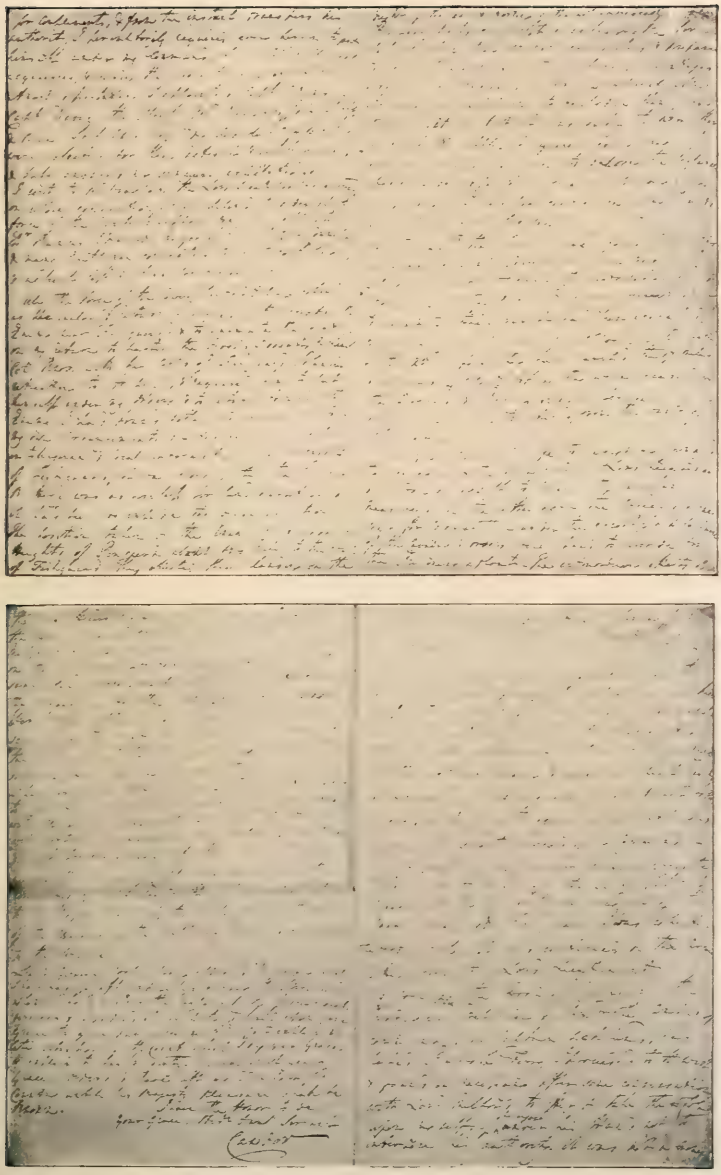
Au reste il est tems de couper le cheveu qui tient le glaive de Buonaparte suspendu sur l'Angleterre. Il est tems de faire cesser cet état d'anxiété qui concentre dans cet empire d'immenses moyens de guerre, qui comprime l'énergie nationale, qui la laisse exposée en spectacle à l'inquiète curiosité des puissances continentales, sans amener aucun résultat utile dans déterminer la fin de cette guerre..

Rien n'est plus dangereux qu'une perpetuelle défensive. Elle ouvre un champ plus vaste aux attaques de toute espece, rapprochées, ou eloignées, de la part de l'ennemi. On veut bien croire que chaque année ajouterait un dégré de perfection, s'il n'était pas dans la nature de l'homme de décroître en Energie, lorsqu'elle a été d'abord poussée au plus haut point, alors qu'elle s'émousse par une trop longue attente.

Mais au bout du compte, quand on aurait perfectionné les mesures prises pour la sûreté de la Patrie, à quoi aboutirait cette éternelle guerre défensive, dont la longueur pourrait endormir, ou attiedir l'énergie nationale, et qui continuerait à donner à l'Empire Britannique l'attitude humiliante d'une place assiegée par une armée moins forte que sa garnison? Quelle confiance pourraient reprendre les Puissances du Continent, si ce système, qui ressemble à la peur, se prolongeait, si cet armement exagéré et ruineux ne devenait dangereux

SPECIMEN PAGE OF THE DUMOURIEZ MS. DISCOVERED BY THE WRITER.

(By permission of Mr. John Lane.)



ORIGINAL DISPATCH OF LORD CAWDOR TO DUKE OF PORTLAND DESCRIBING THE LANDING AND SURRENDER OF THE FRENCH AT FISHGUARD, FEBRUARY, 1797.

(By permission of the G.W.R.)

project in its entirety. It cost me twenty-seven shillings, and formed the basis of a book written in collaboration with Dr. Holland Rose.[1] I have certainly been fortunate in acquiring a great many unknown documents relating to Napoleon and the Napoleonic wars. While rummaging amongst the miscellaneous papers in the possession of Mr. George Mackey, the well-known Birmingham antiquary, I lighted on the whole correspondence between Lord Cawdor and the Duke of Portland relating to the landing in February, 1797, of the French "Black Legion" under Tate at Fishguard, then an almost entirely unknown Welsh fishing village, and now transformed by the Great Western Railway into an important port-of-call. By the kind permission of Mr. J. C. Inglis, General Manager of the G.W.R., a reproduction is now given of the important Cawdor letter first published in the Company's travel-books, "The Country of Castles." The unexpected recovery of these MSS. enabled me to give an exhaustive account of the romantic occurrence with which they deal in "Napoleon and the Invasion of England."[2]

But these were not the only discoveries I made in Mr. Mackey's autographic store. I came upon a number of the original drafts of unpublished patriotic songs by Charles Dibdin, including three in honour of Trafalgar, of which the following is a specimen :—

[1] "Dumouriez and the Defence of England against Napoleon" (London, 1909. *Vide* Preface, pp. xi–xiii).

[2] See "Napoleon and the Invasion of England," by H. Wheeler and A. M. Broadley, vol. i. chapter ii. "A Three Days' War. The Invasion of England by Hoche's Black Brigade, February 22, 23, and 24, 1797," pp. 31–74.

When Nelson fell the voice of Fame
With mingled joy and pain
Lamented that no other name
So glorious could remain.

And worthily is Nelson loved;
Yet, ere a short month's dawn,
Fresh glory Britain's sons have proved,
Led on by gallant Strachan.

Pellew and Smith and Collingwood,
Fine fellows / sailors yet exist;
But to name sailors good
I would take the Navy List.

Great Nelson's brothers called,
And who though for ever gone,
His spirit . . . . . .
And such a tar is Strachan.

Then, Britons, be not out of heart,
Likewise of hopes bereft,
In twain did the sheet-anchor part,
Yet is the best "bower"[1] left.

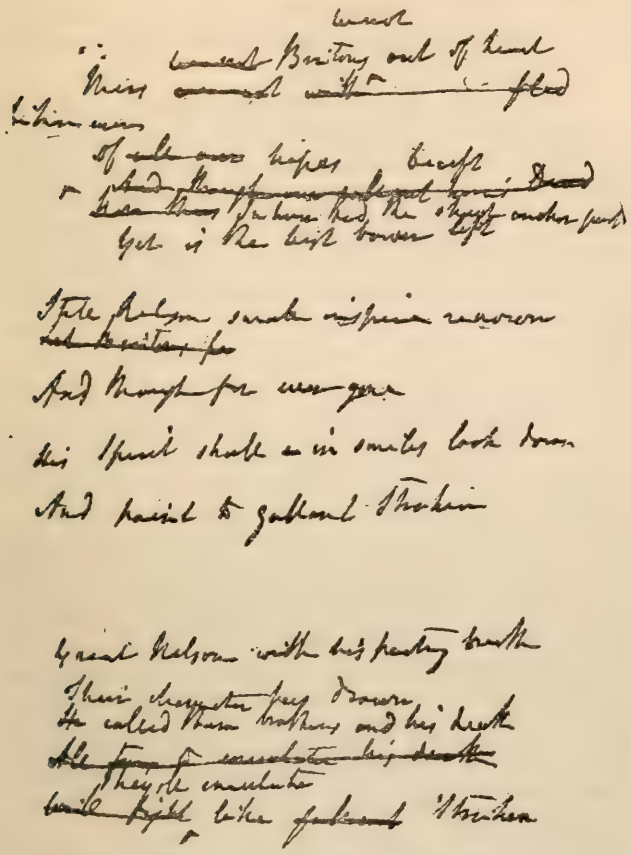
Still Nelson's name inspires renown,
And though for ever gone,
His spirit shall in smiles look down
And point to gallant Strachan.

Great Nelson with his parting breath
Their character has drawn,
He called them brothers, and his death
They'll emulate like Strachan.

For some unaccountable reason the commonplace book of the unofficial laureate of the Navy had drifted to Birmingham. It was found by me

[1] *I.e.*, strongest anchor.

in the same bin of literary odds and ends as the Cawdor dispatches, which obviously ought to have



MS. VERSES ON TRAFALGAR IN THE HANDWRITING OF CHARLES DIBDIN, 1805.

been in the Home Office or the Record Office. At the same time and place I lighted on the letters of

Colonel Digby, the "Mr. Fairly," of Fanny Burney's Journal, to the beautiful sisters Margaret and Isabella Gunning, the first of whom he afterwards married, thereby (if the Court gossip of the day may be trusted) sorely disappointing the literary Assistant-Keeper of the Royal Robes.

It was from Mr. Dobell that I obtained another of the MSS. in my collection which I specially prize —I allude to the holograph copy of Mrs. Robinson's "Memoirs," written nearly entirely on the covering sheets of old letters upon which one reads the signatures of such important and fashionable personages as the Duke of Clarence, Duchesses of Ancaster and Dorset, the Earl of Jersey, the Marquis of Lothian, the Duke of Grafton, and so forth. It is also curious to trace the frequent flittings of the unfortunate "Perdita," the early love of the Prince described in bitter irony as "the first gentleman in Europe." From Berkeley Square she moves to Clarges Street, and thence in rapid succession to Piccadilly, Curzon Street, St. James's Place, Hill Street, Stanhope Street, and South Audley Street. Now she is at the Ship Inn at Brighton; now at the Hôtel de Russie and the Hôtel de Chartres at Paris; now at No. 10, North Parade, Bath. One or two letters seem to have been addressed to Englefield Cottage, where she died. On an ivy-grown tomb in Old Windsor churchyard one can still decipher Samuel Pratt's lines beginning:—

> Of Beauty's Isle her daughters must declare
> She who sleeps here was fairest of the fair.

From this MS. the "Story of Perdita and Florizel" may some day be re-written or re-edited.

By the kindness of Dr. Scott I added to my collection a genuine letter of great Shakespearean interest, for it is addressed to Edward Alleyn, the Founder of Dulwich College, by William Wilson, one of the actors in Shakespeare's troop at the Fortune Theatre. It runs as follows :—

To my most dear and especial good friend Mr. Edward Alleyn at Dulwich.

Right worshipful, my humble duty remembered hoping in the Almighty that your health and prosperity, which on my knees I beseech Him long to continue, for the many favours which I have from time to time received. My poor ability is not in the least degree able to give you satisfaction unless as I and mine have been bound to you for your many kindnesses so will we during life pray for your prosperity. I confess I have found you my chiefest friend in the midst of my extremities which makes me loth to press or request your favour any further, yet for that I am to be married on Sunday next and your kindness may be a great help and furtherance unto me towards the raising of my poor and deserted estate I am enforced once again to entreat your worship's furtherance in a charitable request which is that I may have your worship's letter to Mr. Dowton and Mr. Edward Juby to be a means that the company of players of the Fortune [may] either offer at my wedding at St. Saviour's Church or of their own good nature bestow something upon me on that day and as ever I and mine will not only rest bounden unto yourself but continually pray for your worship's health with increase of all happiness long to continue. I hope of your worship's favour herein. I humbly take my leave. Resting your Worship's during life to be commanded

WILLIAM WILSON.

From the registers of St. Saviour's, Southwark, it is clear that Wilson's marriage took place there on *Sunday*, November 2, 1617, about eighteen months after Shakespeare's death. Dowton, like Farren, is an hereditary theatrical name, and the Wilson letter

reveals another actor Dowton, probably an ancestor of the Dowtons of a later time. Dr. Wallace, the erudite discoverer of the new Shakespeare document at the Record Office, writes me that he considers the letter of William Wilson an excellent specimen of the epistolary style of Shakespeare's time, and of singular interest to Shakespearean students.

Some of my most interesting "finds" are now placed in my Napoleonic collection, which I have almost doubled in extent since the publication of "Collectanea Napoleonica."[1] For £5 I obtained, some five years ago at Sotheby's, the letter of 24 4to pages in which Sir Stamford Raffles describes his visit to St. Helena and his interview with Napoleon. As I received a very substantial sum for permission to reproduce a portion of it in a daily paper, this interesting and valuable MS. cost me nothing. At the Bunbury sale a great many letters of historical importance fetched a comparatively low price. It was at this sale that Mr. Frank Sabin bought the second and more lengthy letter from George Crabbe to Edmund Burke now in my possession. It was at the Bunbury "dispersal" that the late Mr. Frederick Barker bought for me the extraordinary official letter and holograph proclamation to the Vendéans penned by Louis Larochejaquelein on June 2, 1815, an hour or two before his death. These documents would certainly have fetched five times the price I paid for them in Paris, where I had to pay £10 for a letter of his more famous brother Henry, killed in 1794. I also purchased at the Bunbury sale two

[1] "Collectanea Napoleonica." A Catalogue of the Collection of Autographs, &c., &c., relating to Napoleon I. formed by A. M. Broadley, compiled by W. V. Daniell, with a preface by A. M. Broadley (London, 1905).

long letters of C. J. Fox to his uncle, General Fox, and a confidential letter of Earl Bathurst giving Bunbury his opinion of Gourgarid, and enclosing four sheets of a private letter from Sir Hudson Lowe. The companionship of autographs is curious. In a letter of the Marquis Montchenu, the garrulous French Commissioner at St. Helena, I found an autograph of Sir Hudson Lowe, written in 1780 at the London Inn, Exeter, when he was a boy-ensign in the Devon Militia! It was Montchenu who caused a sensation at the Courts of the Allied Powers by declaring that Lowe was about to make Napoleon the godfather of his son, who in 1857 was one of the garrison in the Lucknow Residence. In June, 1906, M. Noël Charavay bought for me at the Dablin sale a number of Napoleonic *rariora*, amongst them the Longwood Household Expenses Book kept by Pierron, the *maître d'hôtel*, between March, 1818, and April 30, 1821. The entries are always countersigned by Montholon, and in many cases are controlled by Napoleon, who frequently made calculations as to the relative value of pounds and shillings in francs. All these papers will, doubtless, be useful to some one who desires to say the last word on the Last Phase, and I am very grateful to Mr. Frank Sabin, who procured for me the original copy of the elaborately-bound "Last Reign of Napoleon," which Mr. J. C. Hobhouse, afterwards Lord Broughton, sent out to Sir Hudson Lowe for presentation to Napoleon, but which was never given to him. On the flyleaf the author copied out a suggestive quotation from Tacitus. The romance of these volumes belongs rather to the subject of extra-illustration, which I hope to deal with in a future work. I have already pointed out the utility

of this interesting pursuit for the proper preservation of valuable autographs. In America, where so many collectors believe that "the political is ephemeral and the literary eternal," thousands of autographs are inserted in as many books, to which the special charm and value of "association" is thus given. I need not say that I have placed a characteristic John Cam Hobhouse letter in the second volume of this unique copy of "The Last Reign of Napoleon." Some two years since I obtained through Messrs. Maggs, of 109, Strand, two very interesting MSS. connected with the Irish Rebellion of 1798. One of these is the Camolin Cavalry Detail Book, May 25–October 8, 1798, and the other is made up of a collection of the letters written between 1796 and 1815 by Arthur, Earl of Mount Norris, a Royalist leader. With the new light obtained from them and the MS. journal of a lady who was an eye-witness of the occurrences she describes, Mr. H. F. B. Wheeler and the writer have endeavoured to again deal with the story of the "War in Wexford." I have by no means completed my list of "finds." I trust, however, I have said enough to illustrate the utility of autograph-hunting and the pleasurable excitement derivable from the unexpected running to earth of some long-since forgotten letter or document which is not only of money value, but can help to throw new light either on the life of the writer, or the far-off times in which it was written.

V

ROYAL AUTOGRAPHS PAST AND PRESENT

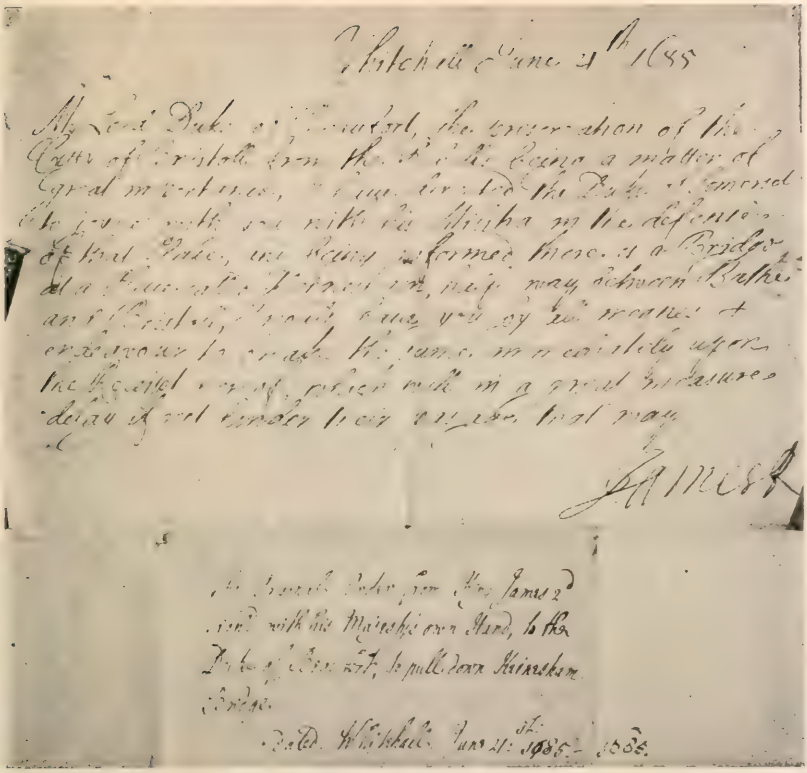
Buckingham Palace
November 16. 1841
Half past 9. a.m. —

Her Majesty and the Infant Prince
continue well —

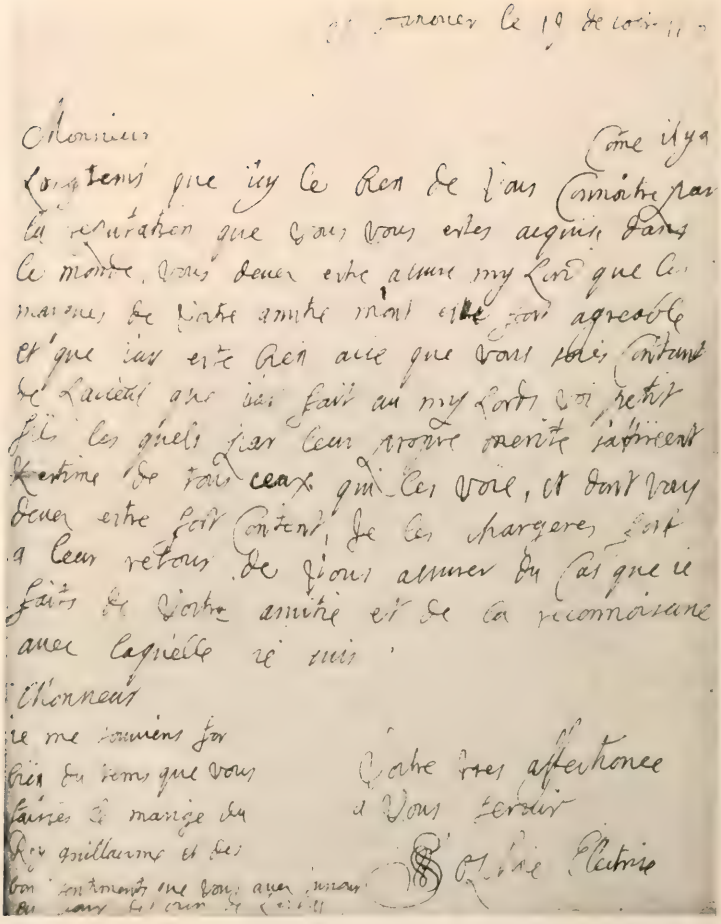
James Clark M.D
Charles Locock M.D
Albert Ferguson M.D
Richard Blagden

Unless any change should occur, no
Bulletin will be issued till Thursday morning

BULLETIN ISSUED A WEEK AFTER THE BIRTH OF KING EDWARD VII. AND SIGNED BY THE MEDICAL MEN IN ATTENDANCE, NOVEMBER 16, 1841.



ORDER TO THE DUKE OF BEAUFORT TO DESTROY KEYNSHAM BRIDGE, NEAR BRISTOL, ON THE APPROACH OF MONMOUTH, SIGNED BY KING JAMES II., JUNE 21, 1685.



A.L.S. OF THE ELECTRESS SOPHIA OF HANOVER TO THE DUKE OF LEEDS, OCTOBER 19, 1710.

CHAPTER V

ROYAL AUTOGRAPHS PAST AND PRESENT—THE COPY-BOOKS OF KINGS AND PRINCES

Some unpublished specimens of the handwriting of Royal Personages present and past

> The very dust of whose writings is gold.
> RICHARD BENTLEY.

THE autographs of Royalty have, for more than a century, formed a favourite subject for collection, not only in the United Kingdom, but on the Continent and in the United States, where I am told the finest examples of this fascinating branch of the autograph cult (Mr. Adrian Joline calls it frankly a hobby) are to be found. Royal letters and signatures figure conspicuously and plentifully in all books of facsimiles, but the young collector would do well to study carefully two volumes devoted exclusively to this particular branch of calligraphy.[1] Examples of Royal handwriting abound in both the Record Office and the British Museum, although a good many were

[1] "The Handwriting of the Kings and Queens of England," by W. J. Hardy (The Religious Tract Society, London, 1893). "Manuel de Diplomatique," by A. Giry (Paris, 1894). The latter is a veritable mine of wealth, and its 1,000 pages abound in all sorts of useful information concerning Royal and official documents. It may almost be described as a key to the archives of Europe.

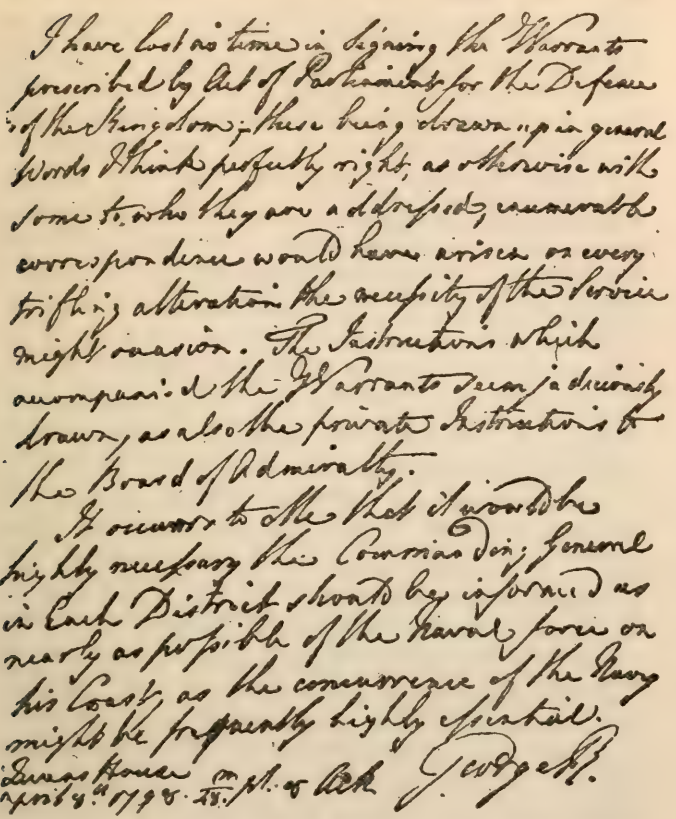
either turned into jelly, burned, or otherwise wasted in consequence of such regrettable transactions as the "waste-paper" deals between the officials of Somerset House and Mr. Jay, and those of the new India Office and the pulping-mills.[1] It is clear that Royal autographs may be looked for in all sorts of out-of-the-way and unexpected places. Henry VIII.'s love-letters to Anne Boleyn are said to be hidden away in the Vatican, and Sir H. Maxwell Lyte found the sign manuals of monarchs amongst the débris of the Belvoir hay-loft.

In no class of autographs is the rise of prices and increase of value so remarkable as in those now under discussion. I cannot precisely ascertain the present worth of the signature of Richard II., with whom the English series is supposed to commence, but M. Noël Charavay tells me that a document signed by John II., the first of the French Royal signers, would fetch £10. Before me lie some interesting details as to the value of Royal autographs in 1827, and a group of catalogues, containing a good many desirable items of this kind, issued in London between 1875 and 1885.

It will be instructive to note the prices which choice specimens fetched at these comparatively recent periods. In *The Archivist* of December, 1889, we are informed that according to the price-currents of 1827 the autographs of "Elizabeth the adored of her people" are worth £2 2s., while Charles I., "worshipped as a martyr," commands the same price. Charles II., with his Queen, Catharine of Braganza, thrown in, fetches no more than £1 5s. James II. is worth £3 8s., owing to a limited supply. William III. yields less than half that figure, but a whole letter of Queen Mary was knocked down for £3 10s.

[1] See *ante*, p. 100.

The expert of this excellent journal continues: "George I., 'a heavy, dull German gentleman,' is



A.L.S. OF KING GEORGE III. ON THE SUBJECT OF THE DEFENCE OF ENGLAND IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THE GREAT TERROR OF 1796–1805.

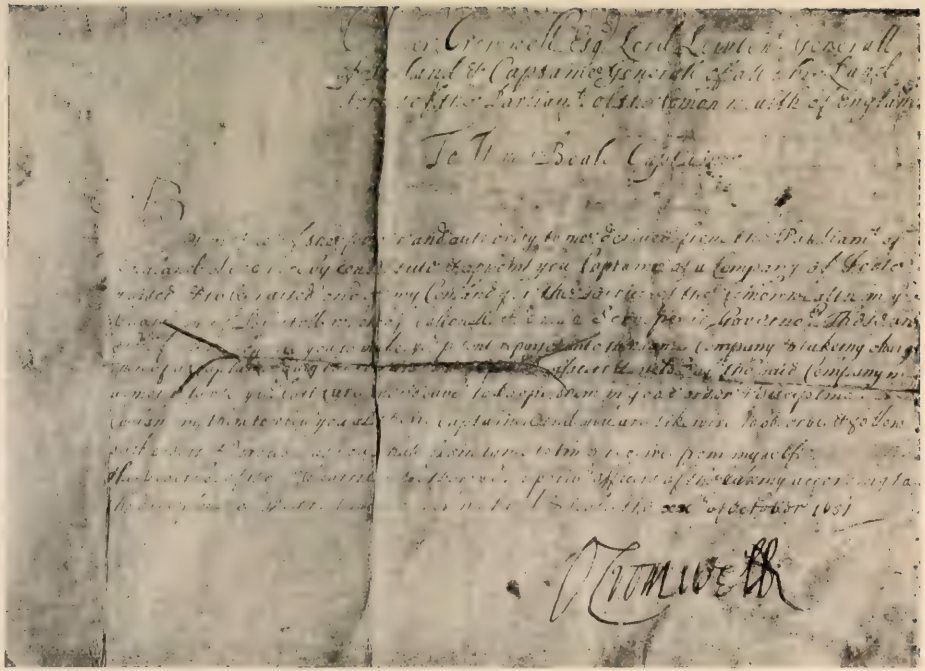
(By permission of Mr. John Lane.)

reckoned worth only £1 1s., and George II., I am ashamed to say it, only 14s. Our beloved monarch

George III., being well remembered, rises to £3 10s. George IV., the most complete gentleman of his age,[1] rises above all his Royal predecessors and reaches £4 14s. 6d.; it is also curious to see how so great a king and so fine a gentleman wrote when he was a boy and to possess a leaf of his copybook. Here I fain would conclude this estimate of British rulers, but truth compels me to add that Oliver Cromwell is deemed worth £5 15s. 6d. French kings are sadly degraded. Five *Grands Monarques*, among whom are Francis I. and Louis XIV., are estimated at the average price of 4s. 1½d. each; Henry IV. advanced to 14s., but Napoleon, in the very teeth of French legitimacy, reaches 20s. higher. A French Queen, Anne of Austria, is worth 7s., while Josephine, the shadow of a French empress, is worth more than five times this sum. A great and wise Emperor of Russia, and the brave King of Prussia, require the aid of a French prince, an English princess, and seven English peers to push them up to 16s." These were indeed halcyon days for the collectors, but at that period they were few and far between. Mr. William Upcott, the *doyen* of modern autograph collectors, reigned almost supreme at "Autograph Cottage," Islington, his only possible competitors being Mr. Young and Mr. John Dillon.

In the mid "eighteen-seventies" Mr. John Waller, the conscript father of London autograph-dealers, was about to move from 58, Fleet Street to Harley House, Artesian Road, Westbourne Grove. A little later the late Mr. Frederick Barker began to issue catalogues of autograph letters and historical documents from Rowan Road, Brook Green. He became

[1] George IV. was alive in 1827.



COMMISSION SIGNED BY OLIVER CROMWELL, OCTOBER 20, 1651.
(In the collection of Sir George White, Bart., of Bristol.)

SIGNATURE OF LORD PROTECTOR RICHARD CROMWELL TO A COMMISSION, JANUARY, 1658.

8me. Division Militaire.

DEPARTEMENS.	CHEFS-LIEUX.
Bouches-du-Rhône	Marseille.
Var	Draguignan.
Alpes-Maritimes	Nice.
Basses-Alpes	Digne.
Vaucluse	Avignon.

REPUBLIQUE FRANCAISE.

Au Quartier-Général, à Marseille, le 14 Messidor, an 11e de la République Française.

Le Général Divisionnaire Cervoni,

Commandant la 8me. Division militaire.

Au Citoyen Directeur de l'administration de la Guerre.

Paris.

Pour lui seul.

Citoyen Ministre,

Je vous adresse une copie de la lettre que j'écris au Ministre de la guerre, relativement aux 6e et 7e Dépôts Coloniaux établis dans la Division que je commande.

Je vous prie de vous réunir à lui soit pour faire donner à la marine les ordres nécessaires pour l'évacuation de ces Dépôts, au moyen des embarquemens successifs, soit pour prendre telle autre mesure qu'il plaira au Gouvernement d'adopter. L'objet de cette lettre mérite toute votre attention.

Salut & Respect.

Cervoni

FOURTEEN LINES IN THE WRITING OF NAPOLEON ON MILITARY ORDER, WITH HIS SIGNATURE, JULY 3, 1803.

the agent of Mr. William Evarts Benjamin, now the *doyen* of the autograph merchants in New York, then residing at 744, Broadway. In Mr. Waller's first catalogues I find the following "Royalties": Charles II. Royal Sign Manual, 7s. 6d.; letter from Charles II. of Spain to William III., 4s. 6d.; George Sign Manual when blind, 7s. 6d.; George I. Sign Manual, 1 p. folio, 12s. 6d.; Henry II. of France, fine D.S. with State seal, 12s. 6d.; King of Siam, 7s. 6d.; Papal Bull of Urban VIII., 30s.; Warrant of Privy Council of Edward VI. with numerous rare signatures, 25s.; Duke of Sussex, interesting letter on the trial of Queen Caroline, 4s. 6d.; Queen Victoria, two Royal Sign Manuals at 10s. each; Henry VIII. Royal Sign Manual on "vellum, document of great beauty," 48s.; Henry VII. Royal Sign Manual on "document of greatest interest," 70s.; Frederick Prince of Wales, L.S., 10s.; Charles I. when Prince of Wales, D.S., 34s.; Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette—signatures on two "important documents," 24s. the pair; Napoleon I. L.S. 2 pp. 4to to Prince of Neuchatel, Valladolid, January 11, 1809, 25s.; Papal Bull Alexander III., 1181, 47s. 6d.; Mary II. Royal Sign Manual, 30s.; Original Orders for Arrest of Louis Napoleon (Napoleon III.), June 13, 1848, 52s. 6d.; Napoleon II. (King of Rome), 4 pp. of an original historical essay, 48s.; Royal Sign Manual of Philip and Mary, ten guineas; A.L.S. of Charles II., 1½ pp., Whitehall, September 26, 1660, *à sa chère sœur*, 73s. 6d. I will not pursue this list further. The reader can judge of the relative value of Royal autographs in 1827 and 1875–80.

In the price of the autographs of sovereigns of minor importance there has been no striking rise

since 1880. Indeed, I note that on December 17th, 1909, letters and documents signed by Ferdinand, Grand Duke of Tuscany, Louis XVIII. of France, Mathias de Medicis, also of Tuscany, and Rudolph II., Emperor of Germany, were knocked down in one lot at Sotheby's for five shillings. But letters of the Tudor and Stuart sovereigns are fetching as many pounds in 1910 as they did shillings eighty years ago. A pardon granted by James II. to Edward Strode, of Downside, "on account of his entertaining the Duke of Monmouth for one night immediately after his defeat at Sedgemoor," sold on December 17, 1909, for £57. Mr. Waller in 1876 would assuredly have catalogued it at 57s. or less. Four years ago I purchased for Sir George White, Bart., of Bristol, an order, signed by the same sovereign, enjoining the Duke of Beaufort to burn Keynsham Bridge on the approach of Monmouth and his followers, at the modest price of 42s. Amongst other letters or documents belonging to this category figuring in the last sale of 1909 may be mentioned a letter signed by Cromwell addressed to the Genevan Senate on the recent Protestant massacres in the Alps (July 28, 1655), for which Mr. Sabin gave £31, and two A.L.S.—one of George IV. and one of William IV., which went to Mr. W. V. Daniell for 12s. To what indignation would this startling fall in value have moved the righteous soul of the chronicler of the sale-prices of 1827! MSS. of "The First Gentleman in Europe" rank no longer amongst the high-priced autographs, but I shall have more to say of them presently. Experience has taught me to look in Munich and Paris for bargains in the matter of seventeenth-century Stuart letters. At Munich I quite lately came across a fine A.L.S.

of Charles I. for £10, and a delightful L.S. of his eldest son while in exile to the Elector Palatine, with seals and silken cords intact, for 50s. Good William III. letters now average £10, but I obtained the following characteristic letter written from the Camp before Namur for less than half that sum:—

AU CAMP DEVAND NAMUR, 13 *de juillet*, 1695.
A neuf heures du soir.

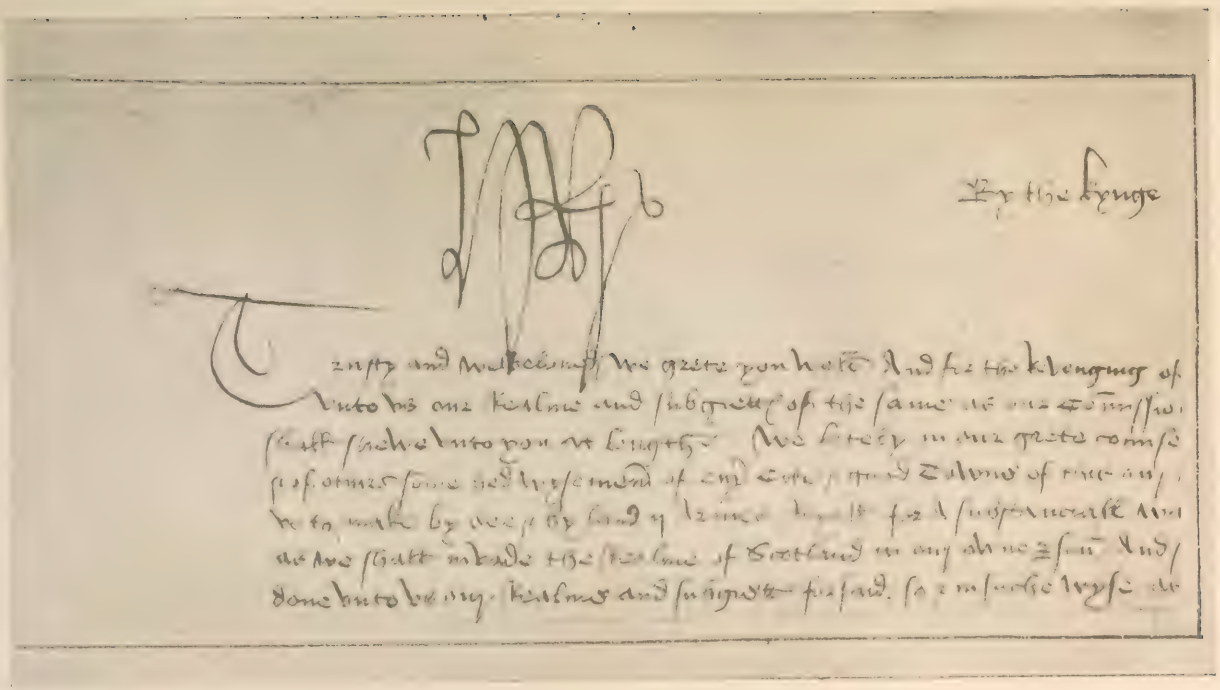
J'ay receu ce matin vostre lettre de hier du matin a neuf eures, j'ay donne les ordres pour faire marcher demain a la pointe du jour le Brigadier St. Paul avec cinq batt; selon la route que Dopp vous envoyerez pour les Dragons je vous en ay ecrit hier et attendres vostre reponse. Si vous trouves que vous n'avez pas besoin de ces batt: vous les pouvez faire halte en chemain et me les renvoyer. Jusque a present je n'ay point de nouvelle que Precontal a marche vers le Haynaut aussi tot que je le sauroi je vous en advertires, ce qui se passeray Dopp vous le mendra je suis tres touche du malheur du povre fagel qui nous faira grand faute je ne scai . . . s'il en ecchapera, je suis toujours a vous.

WILLIAM R.

Letters of the Electress Sophia of Hanover very rarely turn up, and I consider the following quaint epistle addressed to that astute "trimmer," the Duke of Leeds, when she was over eighty, a great bargain at 30s.:—

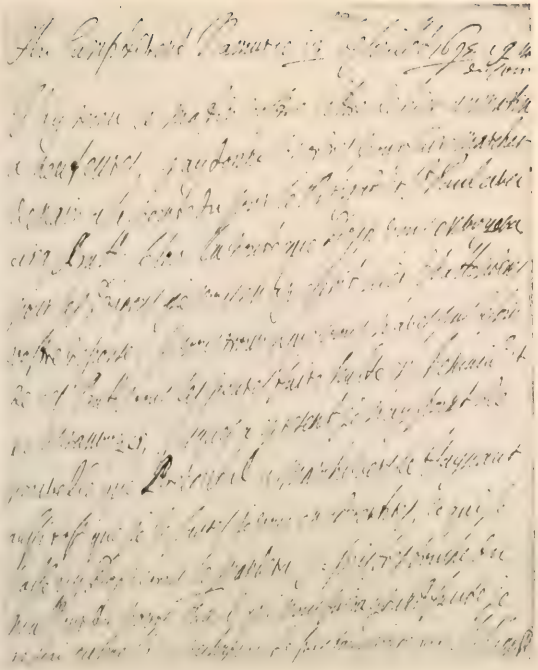
HANOVER *le* 19 *Decbre* 1710.
A Monsieur le Duc de Leeds.

MONSIEUR,—Longtems que j'ay le bien de vous connoitre come il y a par la reputation que vous vous estes acquise dans le monde, vous devez estre assuré my Lord que les marques de votre amitié m'ont este fort agreable et que i'ay este bien aise que vous serés Contant de l'acceuil que j'ais fait au my Lords vos petits fils lesquels par leur propre merite s'attirent l'estime de tous ceux qui les voie, et dont

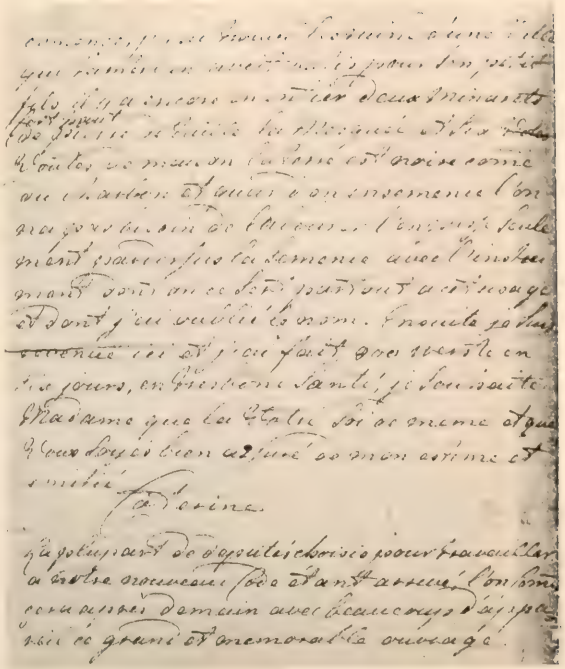


AUTOGRAPH OF HENRY VII., KING OF ENGLAND (1456–1509).

(In the collection of Messrs. Maggs.)



A.L.S. OF KING WILLIAM III. FROM CAMP BEFORE NAMUR, JULY 13, 1795.



LAST PAGE OF A.L.S. OF EMPRESS CATHERINE OF RUSSIA TO MRS. DE BIELKE, OF HAMBURG, JULY 28, 1767.

vous devez estre fort content. Je les chargeres fort à leur retour de vous assurer du cas que je faits de votre amitié et de la reconnaissance avec la qu'elle je suis Monsieur

Votre tres affectione
a vous servir
SOPHIE ELECTRICE.

Je me souviens fort bien du tems que vous faites le mariage du Roy Guillaume et des bons bons sentiment que vous tenies en cœur.

Letters of Frederick the Great, be they holograph or merely signed, are cheaper in England than on the Continent. Even the L.S. are often witty, and I have met with many good specimens at from 10s. to 15s. One of the greatest treasures in my collection is a superb letter of the Empress Catharine II. of Russia, dated July 28, 1767, and addressed to Madame de Bielka, of Hamburg, who gave it to a Foreign Office official, Sir Charles Flint, from whose descendant it passed into my possession. It was submitted by M. Noël Charavay [1] to M. Rambaud, ex-Minister of Public Instruction, Professor at the Sorbonne, who discovered it to be one of an important series, of which sixteen are published in the "Collection de la Société impériale d'histoire de Russie." Sir Charles Flint was an early collector of autographs, and his duties as a King's Messenger gave him excellent opportunities of picking up treasures like this. I think it best to give the letter in the original French, instead of following the modernised version adopted in Paris :—

A MA TERRE DE KOLOMINSKA A SEPT WERSTE DE MOSCOU
le 28 Juillet 1767.

MADAME,—Je suis de retour de mon grand voyage depuis six semaine, et pendant ce tems a peine aije trouvé le moment

[1] "L'Amateur d'Autographes," August, 1905, pp. 191–93.

pour vous repondre, quoique tout les jours je me disois demain j'ecrirés et lorsque demain venoit j'avois autant de tracas, que la veille, et au sortir de la j'etois si fatigué que je pouvoit dire coñe le Philosophe marié, A force de penser je n'ai plus d'idée ; en attendant j'ai a repondre a cinq de vos lettre dans lequelles je trouve repandu un sentimens universel de votre part de m'obliger ; je vous en ai bien de l'obligation madame, et j'y reconnois parfaitement ce caractere aimable qui vous a toujours distingué. En revange des nouvelles de l'Europe dont vous me faite part quelque fois je vous en conterés d'Asie, j'ai fait 1300 Werstes sur le Volga j'ai descendu dans les endroits les plus remarquables, j'ai trouvé les deux bords du Volga d'une beauté au dessus presque de l'expression, peuplés et cultivés tres honetement, mais l'endroit qui a le plus attiré mon attention est sans contredit la ville de Casan ; au premier coup d'œil l'on voit que s'est la capitale d'un grand Royaume ; j'y ai trouvé des habitans de huit nations aussi differentes par leur habillement que par leurs mœurs, Religions, languages, et idées, cette Ville est tres opulente et s'est la premiere des nôtres qui a recoñu que les batimens de bois sont moins bons que ceux de pierres, qui peut, en fait a present de cette derniere espeçe, et ceux qui n'ont pas euë cette facultés ont euë le malheur de perdre les leurs il y a deux ans par un incendie, j'ai trouvé la moitié de la ville brulée mais en verité l'on ne s'en aperçevoit pas, tant cette ville est grande, je fais rebatir la moitié brulés en pierre et probablement ce sera un quartier tres hoñete, la Ville m'a doñé une mascarade un souper un feu d'artifiçe et une fete publique pour le peuple ou chaque nation dansoit a sa façon devant la maîson, au j'étois ; il y avoit une affluance de Noblesse d'allentour qui fit qu'il y eut jusqu'a quatre cent masque de cet état des deux sexe. J'ai trouvé outre cela de tres belle fabrique et des marchandise de touttes espece. On avait élevé un arc de triomphe pour mon entrée coñe je n'en ai vuë encore, de pareil a aucune solemnellité. Enfin après sept jours j'ai quité a regret cette ville qui n'a d'autre defaut que d'être situé a 800 Werste de celleçi et en Asie, en revange le sol est excellent, les asperges sauvage les serises les abricots sauvages et les roses y vieñent coñe les broussailles dans les autres pays, on chauffe les fourneaux avec du chene et des tilleuls faute d'autre bois. Nous y avons trouvé une chaleur excessive a la fin de may et l'hiver y dure moins qu'ici, j'ai

été de la jusqu'au confins du Royaume de Casan et ou celui d'Astracan coñençe, j'y ai trouvé les ruine d'une ville que Tamerlan avoit batis pour son petit fils il y a encore en entier deux minarets fort haut de pierre de taille la mosquée et six Voûtes de maison la terre est noire coñe du charbon et quand on ensemence l'on na pas besoin de labourer l'on passe lentement pardessus la semence avec l'instrument dont on se sert partout a cet usage et dont j'ai oublié le nom. Ensuite je suis revenue ici et j'ai fait 800 werste en six jours, en tres boñe santé, je souhaite Madame que la votre soi de meme et que vous soyés bien assuré de mon estime et amitié.

CATERINE.

La plupart de neuf deputés choisis pour travailler a notre nouveaue Code étant arrivé, l'on coñençera après demain avec beaucoup d'appareil ce grand et memorable ouvrage.

For the following translation I am indebted to Professor Maurice A. Gerothwohl, Litt.D., of the University of Bristol :—

AT MY ESTATE OF KOLOMINSKA, SEVEN VERSTS FROM MOSCOW.

July 28, 1767.

MADAM,—It is now six weeks since I returned from my long journey, and during this time I have been scarcely able to find a moment in which to reply to you, although I said to myself daily, "I will write to-morrow"; but, when the morrow came, I experienced the same trouble as on the previous day, and in the end I was so tired that I might well have exclaimed with "The Married Philosopher,"[1] "I have thought so much that I have no thoughts left." Meanwhile I have to answer five letters of your own, all of which breathe a general desire on your part to be of some service to me. I am, indeed, obliged to you for this, Madam, wherein I readily discern that lovable disposition which has ever been one of your distinguishing traits.

---

[1] Comedy by Destouches. "The Married Philosopher" was played at the Comédie Française in 1727.

In return for the European news which you communicate to me from time to time, here is news from Asia. I did 1,300 versts on the Volga, landing at the most notable spots. I found both banks of the Volga beautiful almost beyond expression, and withal fairly populated and cultivated. But the spot which attracted most attention on my part is unquestionably the City of Kazan.[1] You recognise at first sight that you are here in the capital of a great kingdom. I found there members of eight nationalities, all equally distinct in dress, customs, religion, language, and modes of thought. The city is very prosperous, and the first of our towns to recognise that wooden are inferior to stone buildings. All who can afford it, now build houses of the latter type, and those who were precluded from doing so had the misfortune of seeing their homes wrecked in a conflagration which occurred some two years since. But as a matter of fact, we never noticed this, as the city is so vast. I am having the ruined half of the city rebuilt in stone, and it will probably present a very respectable appearance. The city authorities entertained me to a masque, a supper, fireworks, while for the people there was held a public festival, at which each nation danced in its own peculiar style in front of the house in which I was staying. There was a great influx of the nobility of the neighbourhood, so that the masks of both sexes belonging to this order numbered no fewer than four hundred. Apart from all this, I came across fine factories, and goods of all descriptions. For my entry, they had erected a triumphal arch such as I had never yet beheld at any solemnity. Finally, when seven days had elapsed, I left with some diffidence this town whose only fault is that it is situated in Asia, and distant from here by some 800 versts. On the other hand, its soil is most fruitful, wild asparagus, cherries, apricots, and roses growing there like brushwood in other lands. They heat their ovens with oak and lime-tree, there being no other wood available. We found it excessively hot there at the end of May, and their winter is shorter than

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[1] A Russian city on the left bank of the Kasanka, 460 miles east of Moscow. Its university and library were already famous at the time of the Empress's visit. It is fortified by a stone wall six miles in circumference.

our own. Thence I proceeded to the limits of the Kingdom of Kazan, and the starting point of the boundaries of the Astrakhan Kingdom. And here I came across the ruins of a town built by Tamerlane for his grandson, of which all that survives in its entirety are a couple of minarets built of free-stone, a mosque, and six vaulted chambers. The soil there is as black as coal, and when you sow there is no need to till; you need only pass lightly over the seeds with an instrument used everywhere for that purpose, the name of which I have forgotten. Following upon that, I returned here, covering 800 versts in six days, and feeling none the worse for it. I only hope that your health is equally satisfactory, and that you entertain no doubts as to my regard and friendship for you.

CATHARINE.

The majority of the nine deputies who have been appointed to work at our new Code having now arrived, we shall embark to-morrow upon that great and epoch-making task with due solemnity.

What a contrast does the vigorous letter of Catharine "Slay-Czar," as Horace Walpole was pleased to call her, present to the following letter of Louis XVI., written to Lavoisier, the Physicist, while the premonitory grumblings of the coming storm were still audible!

VERSAILLES *le* 15 *Mars* 1789.

Votre derniere experience, Monsieur, fixe encore toutte mon admiration. Cette découverte prouve que vous avez aggrandi la sphère des connoissances utiles. Vos expériences sur le gaz inflammable prouvent combien vous vous occupiez de cette science admirable qui, tous les jours, fait de nouveaux progrès. La Reine et quelques personnes que je desire rendre témoins de votre découverte, se réuniront dans mon cabinet, demain a sept heures du soir. Vous me ferez plaisir de m'i apporter le *traitté des gaz inflammables*. Vous connoissez, Monsieur, toutte mon amitié pour vous.

LOUIS.

[Translation].

Versailles 15 *March* 1789.

Sir,—My admiration is still wholly riveted upon your latest experiment. This discovery proves that you have enlarged the sphere of useful knowledge. Your experiments on inflammable gas prove to what extent you have cultivated that admirable science which is daily making further strides. The Queen and a few persons to whom I am anxious to show your discovery will meet in my study to-morrow evening, at seven. I shall be pleased if you will bring with you the *Treatise on inflammable Gas.* You are not unaware, sir, of the very great friendship which I bear you.

Louis.

The old Princess Amelia, Aunt to George III., the legends of whose snuff-taking and card-playing still linger at Gunnersbury and in Cavendish Square, was a wit in her way. Horace Walpole yawned incontinently at one of her whist parties, and made amends in verse. This is what she wrote him in return :—

Princess Amelia to Horace Walpole.

17 *of June.*

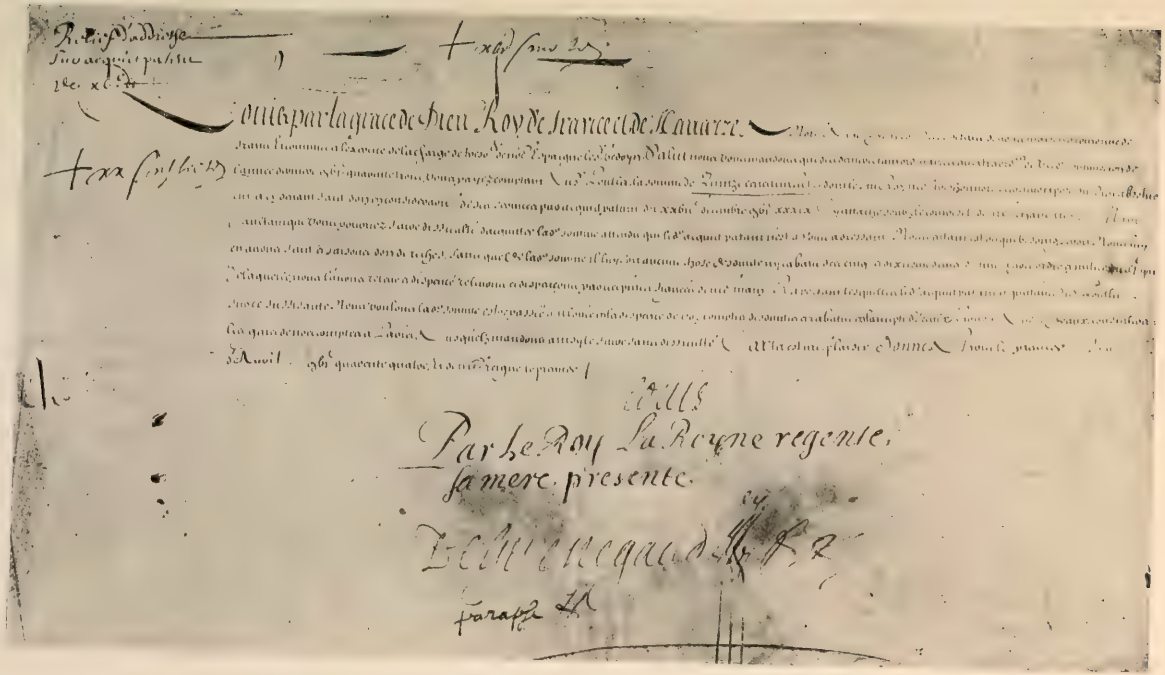
I wish I had a name that could answer your proud verses. Your yawning yesterday opend your vein for pleasing me and I return you my thanks my good Mr. Walpole and remain,

Sincerely your friend,

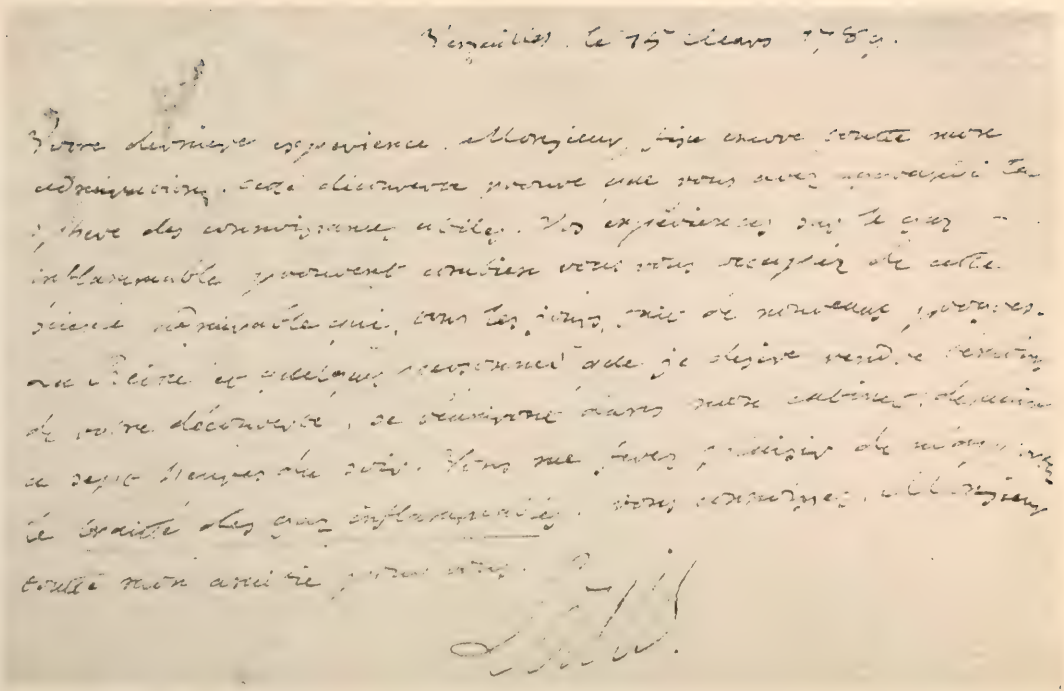
Amelia.

At the back, in the handwriting of Walpole, "From Her Royal Highness Princess Amelia June 17 1786."

Few Royal letters interest me more than those of George III., upon whose worth of character, in my opinion, they throw a strong light. Five years ago they were comparatively rare, although Farmer George was his own Secretary, and appears to have been at

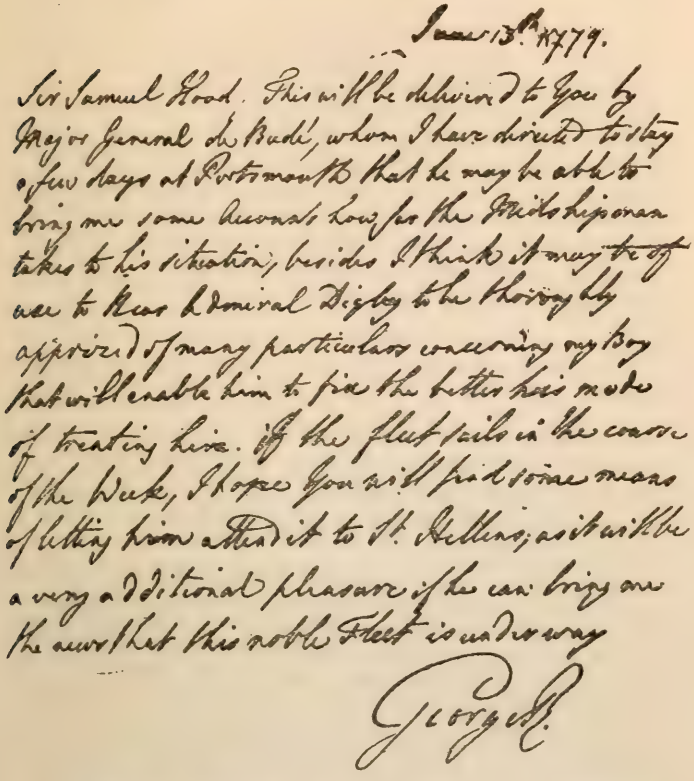


ONE OF THE EARLIEST SIGNATURES OF LOUIS XIV. (AGED SIX).



INTERESTING A.L.S. OF LOUIS XVI. TO THE CHEMIST LAVOISIER ON THE SUBJECT OF THE DISCOVERY OF INFLAMMABLE GAS, VERSAILLES, MARCH 15, 1789.

his desk at all hours of the day and night from 1760 until his Jubilee in 1809, when blindness fell upon him, and his signature became an undecipherable scrawl.



A.L.S. OF KING GEORGE III. TO SIR SAMUEL HOOD (AFTERWARDS LORD HOOD), JUNE 13, 1779.

His writing was peculiarly neat and legible. Only when under the influence of illness or strong emotion did he omit to add the hour and minutes to the day of the week and month. Here is an early letter

written to the future Lord Hood, when the future King William IV. went to sea as a boy of twelve.[1]

George III. to Sir Samuel Hood,

June 13th, 1779.

Sir Samuel Hood,—This will be delivered to you by Major General de Budé, whom I have directed to stay a few days at Portsmouth that he may be able to bring me some accounts how far the Midshipman takes to his situation, besides I think it may be of use to Rear Admiral Digby to be thoroughly apprised with many particulars concerning my Boy that will enable him to fix the better his mode of treating him. If the fleet sails in the course of the Week I hope you will find some means of letting him attend it to St. Hellens; as it will be a very additional pleasure if he can bring me the news that this noble Fleet is under way.

George R.

Nine years later he goes to Cheltenham with the threatenings of his first attack of mental affliction upon him. He writes thus banteringly to his daughter the Princess Sophia, who lived down to our own time, and whom my mother remembered seeing in a sedan chair in Bond Street:—

Cheltenham *Aug* 4 1788

My dearest Sophia,—The account this day of Mary is so charming that it has quite put me into spirits, and prepared me for going tomorrow after dinner to Worcester where I shall remain till Friday evening that I may attend the three Mornings at the Cathedral the Musick of my admiration Handel.

Yesterday evening Lady Reed with all her curtsies left this place, but not without inviting *your Gentleman* to come as a *connoisseur* to assist her Mackaws, Parrots and Paroqueets. Tell Gooly that she is not forgot for Sestini's songs are play'd in honour of her on the walks and *dear Mr. Hunt* enquir'd very kindly of the Colonel after her, I ever remain

My dearest Sophia

Your most affectionate Father,

George R.

---

[1] See *post*, p. 143.

PS.—It is not right to tell stories out of school or I could mention that the *Gentleman* is the admiration of all the Ladies and that on the Walks he is ever talking to some Lady or other not known by those who have been here some time, indeed, I believe the knowledge of his coming has brought them from all parts of the Island.

Lady Reed was one of those persons who followed the Court everywhere—a peculiarity not wholly extinct. There is a curious caricature of her making her bow to Royalty on the Weymouth Esplanade, surrounded by a bevy of spaniels, the companions of the "Mackaws, Parrots and Paroqueets" mentioned by the King, who evidently understood her. In the late autumn the King's affliction declared itself, but in the following April he became convalescent, and the following is one of the first letters he wrote on his recovery :—

George III to Lord Sydney.

Though heartily tired of receiving addresses, as I am on Saturday to receive through the hands of the Lord Mayor of London and the Sheriffs one from the livery of London, I do not object to the Laity of the Protestant Dissenters sending a Deputation with an Address on the same day. Lord Sydney may therefore authorize Mr. Nepean to give a favourable answer to the Application of Mr. Boyle French.

G. R.

Windsor,
April 11. 1789.

Here is a letter of seven years later, when the strained relations of the "First Gentleman in Europe" and his wife, the Princess Caroline, became a public scandal :—

George III. to Caroline, Princess of Wales.

Windsor, 28 *Juin* 1796

Madame ma Fille,—J'ai reçu hier votre lettre au sujet du bruit repandu dans le public de Votre repugnance a vous

preter à une parfaite reconcilliation avec Mon Fils le Prince de Galles je ne disconvient pas (*sic*) que cette opinion commence à prendre racine, et qu'il n'y a qu'une manière de la détruire c'est que Mon Fils ayant consenti que la Comtesse de Jersey doit suivant votre desire quitter Votre Service et ne pas être admise à Votre Societé privée. Vous devez témoigner votre desir qu'il revient chez lui, et pour rendre la reconcilliation complette on doit des deux cote's abstenir de reproches, et ne faire des confidences à d'autres sur ce sujet. Une conduite si propre certainement remettra cette Union entre mon Fils et Vous qui est un des evenemens que j'ai le plus à louer.

Mon fils le Duc de York Vous remettra cette lettre et Vous assurera de plus de l'amitié sincere avec la quelle je suis

Madame Ma Belle Fille

Votre très affectueux Beau Pere

GEORGE R.

The finest letters of George III. from a moral and patriotic point of view are unquestionably those written during the "Great Terror," when for nearly ten years the practical realisation of Napoleon's threatened invasion of our shores was expected at any moment. Some years ago, at the cost of £5, I obtained the following letter addressed by the King to Lord Mulgrave just four days before Trafalgar:—

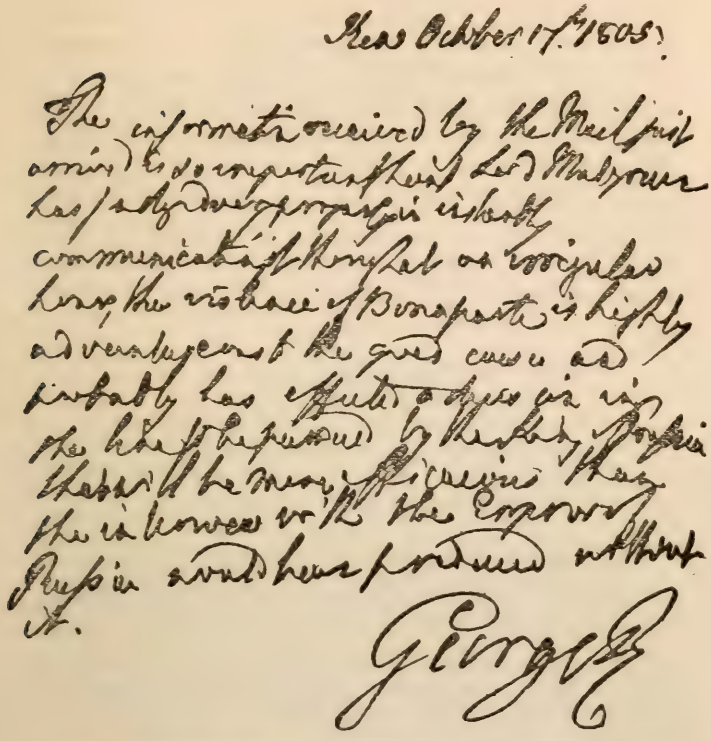
KEW, *October* 17 1805

The information receivèd by the mail just arrived is so important that Lord Mulgrave has judged very properly in instantly communicating it, though at an irregular hour. The violence of Bonaparte is highly advantageous to the good cause, and probably has affected a decision in the line to be pursued by the King of Prussia that will be more efficacious than the interview with the Emperor of Russia would have produced without it.

GEORGE R.

Shortly after the death of the late Duke of Cambridge a vast number of George III.'s letters sud-

denly flooded the market. The average price fell from £5 and more to £2 and less. Every autograph dealer in London had a stock, so there could be no "corner" in "Georges." I contrived to get thirty or



A.L.S. OF KING GEORGE III. WRITTEN FOUR DAYS BEFORE THE BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR.

forty—mostly written from Weymouth. It seems that during the great crisis King George wrote almost daily to "Dear Frederic" (his son the Duke of York, Commander-in-Chief), and many of these

letters are of the greatest interest. For 10s. I picked up the King's holograph draft of a plan for mobilising an army of defence between Dorchester and Weymouth.[1] Between 1789 and 1805 George III. paid fourteen visits to Weymouth. Many momentous acts of State were carried out at the Royal Lodge, now transformed, with hardly any structural change, into the Gloucester Hotel. If it had not been for the death of the Duke of Gloucester, the King would have received the news of Trafalgar in the same place where he had talked a few weeks previously with "Nelson's Hardy." Some day these letters will help materially the telling of the story of the "Court by the Sea." I thank Thackeray for the lines which made George III., when old, blind, and forsaken, say :—

> "My brain perhaps might be a feeble part,
> But yet I think I had an English heart
> When all the Kings were prostrate; I alone
> Stood face to face against Napoleon,
> Nor even could the ruthless Frenchman forge
> A fetter for old England and old George."

The letters of the Princess of Wales (1796–1819), the Queen Caroline of 1820–21, are not very valuable, but they are curious.[2] They are now quite as valu-

[1] This is published in "Dumouriez and the Defence of England against Napoleon." Others appear in "Napoleon and the Invasion of England" (1907), and the "War in Wexford" (1910).

[2] Several letters of Queen Caroline in my possession are published in Mr. Frederic Chapman's "A Queen of Indiscretions" (London, 1907). In my copy of this interesting book I have inserted a furious exchange of letters between Prince Leopold (Leopold I. of Belgium) and Lady Anne Hamilton as to a supposed slight offered by the former to Queen Caroline in June, 1820.

able as those of her worthless husband and his successor, of whom I possess several interesting examples, beginning in the days when he was sailing with Digby and earning the sobriquet of "Jolly Young Tarry-breeks." At the sale of the library of the Princess Edward of Saxe-Weimar (June 21, 1904) I purchased three volumes, bound in green calf, full of Prince William's early notes and exercises. One of these is docketed by the youthful sailor "Remarks on Countries, Harbours, Towns, etc. on board the *Prince George*, Feb 8 1780 William Henry." Some day my friends in the United States will read a description of New York from the pen of a future King of England, written a century and a quarter ago, and the romantic story connected with it. Here is a letter he wrote home to his tutor, Dr. Majendie, from Sandy Hook. It speaks volumes, at any rate, for his good intentions:—

DEAR SIR,—I send you enclosed a key of a table of mine that stands in the long room next to my bed-chamber in London. I shall beg as a favour you would send me to the West Indies everything in those drawers and a box with colours and pencils as Captain Knight is so good as to teach me to draw.

I understand that the convoy does not sail till late, therefore you will go in the Packet, I suppose: In this case I must heartily wish you a quick passage, a sight of your family in London, to whom I beg you will make my best wishes, thank your Brother in my name for having collected the Poets for me.

The little I have seen of Captain Napier I like very well; I hope he does the same of me; in the letters you allowed me the pleasure to write pray give me such advice as you think necessary I shall hope to receive it from nobody, but particularly from you I have so long lived with.

I am, Dear Sir,

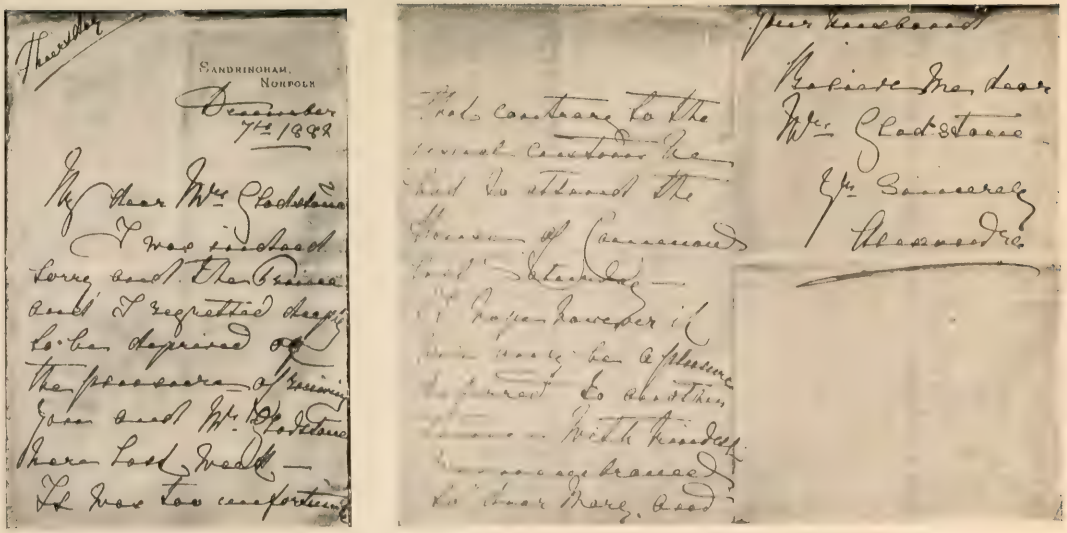
Your most affectionate and sincere friend,

WILLIAM HENRY.

There is nothing more astonishing than the manner in which the letters of the late Queen Victoria have got into the autograph market on either side of the Atlantic. Mr. Joline gives a very startling instance of this, and I believe all her late Majesty's correspondence with Mr. Gladstone went to America, and that for a very inadequate consideration. The examples I give of the writing of living members of the Royal Family are only fragments reproduced as specimens of calligraphy. I can never quite understand how the Royal letters came to figure in dealers' catalogues, notwithstanding in many cases the confidential nature of their contents. In his "Collections and Recollections" (1898) Mr. George W. E. Russell gives the following autograph anecdote :—

"Like many other little boys, Prince Alexander of Battenberg ran short of pocket-money and wrote an ingenious letter to his august Grandmother, Queen Victoria, asking for some slight pecuniary assistance. He received in return a just rebuke, telling him that little boys should keep within their limits and that he must wait till his allowance next became due. Shortly afterwards the undefeated little Prince resumed the correspondence in something like the following form : 'My dear Grandmama, I am sure you will be glad to know that I need not trouble you for any money just now, for I sold your last letter to another boy here for thirty shillings.'"

Within the last few years the death of two or three trusted couriers and upper servants accounts for the sale of a great many papers of this kind, including whole bundles of telegrams in the handwriting of their employers. From a similar source came one of the last letters Queen Victoria ever penned, and a very



Thursday

SANDRINGHAM,
NORFOLK

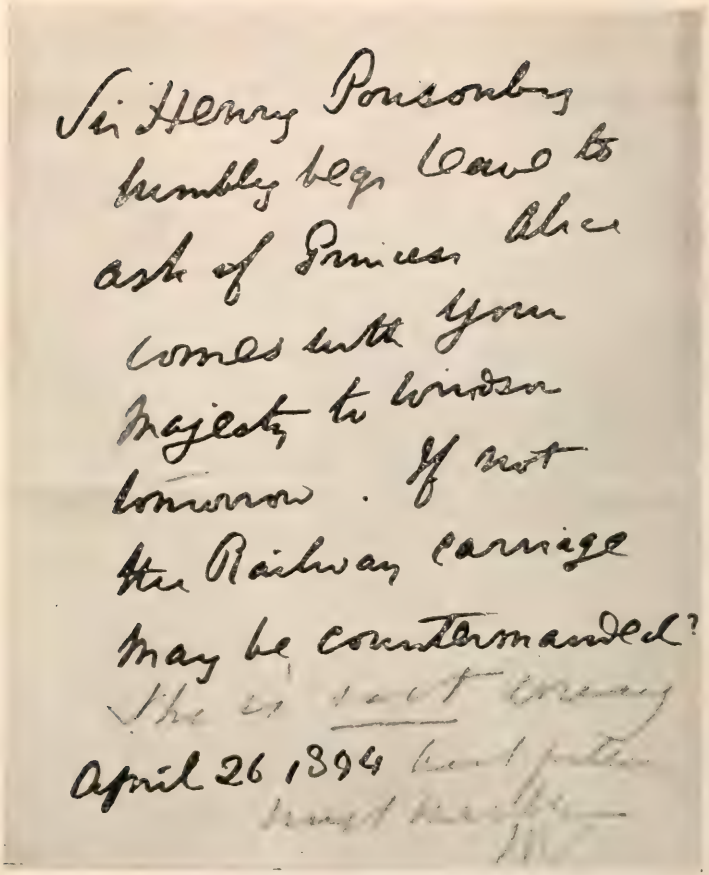
December
7th 1888

My dear Mrs Gladstone
I was indeed
sorry and the Prince
and I regretted deeply
to be deprived of
the pleasure of receiving
you and Mr Gladstone
here last week —
It was too unfortunate

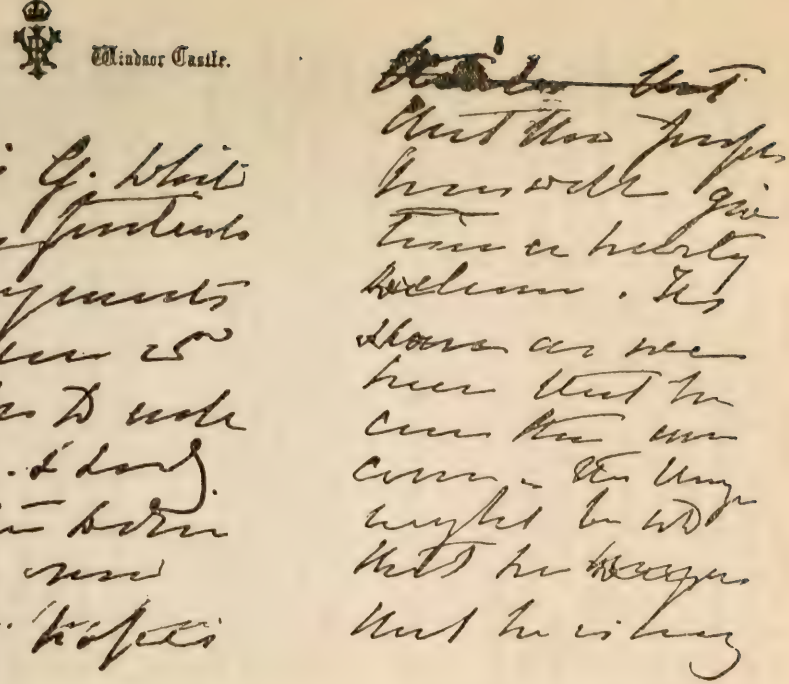
That contrary to the
usual custom he
had to attend the
House of Commons
last Saturday —
I hope however it
will only be a pleasure
deferred to another
[illegible] with kindest
[illegible] branded
to dear Mary and

Your husband
Believe me dear
Mrs Gladstone
Yrs Sincerely
Alexandra

A.L.S. OF QUEEN ALEXANDRA TO MRS. GLADSTONE, DECEMBER 7, 1888.


Sir Henry Ponsonby
humbly begs leave to
ask of Princess Alice
comes with Your
Majesty to Windsor
tomorrow. If not
the Railway carriage
may be countermanded?
April 26 1894

QUEEN VICTORIA'S ORDER ON A LETTER OF SIR HENRY PONSONBY, APRIL 26, 1894.



ONE OF THE LAST LETTERS WRITTEN BY QUEEN VICTORIA, ADDRESSED TO GENERAL SIR GEORGE WHITE, OF LADYSMITH.

touching relic it is, showing the care for others and deep womanly sympathy which characterised the whole of her life. I have since learned that it is customary to retranscribe the originals of telegrams penned by illustrious personages. If this is so the practice is most reprehensible. The telegrams from H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught to the late Queen Victoria have nothing in them of a confidential character. The first telegram is reproduced by permission of the Editor of *The Country Home*; the second runs as follows :—

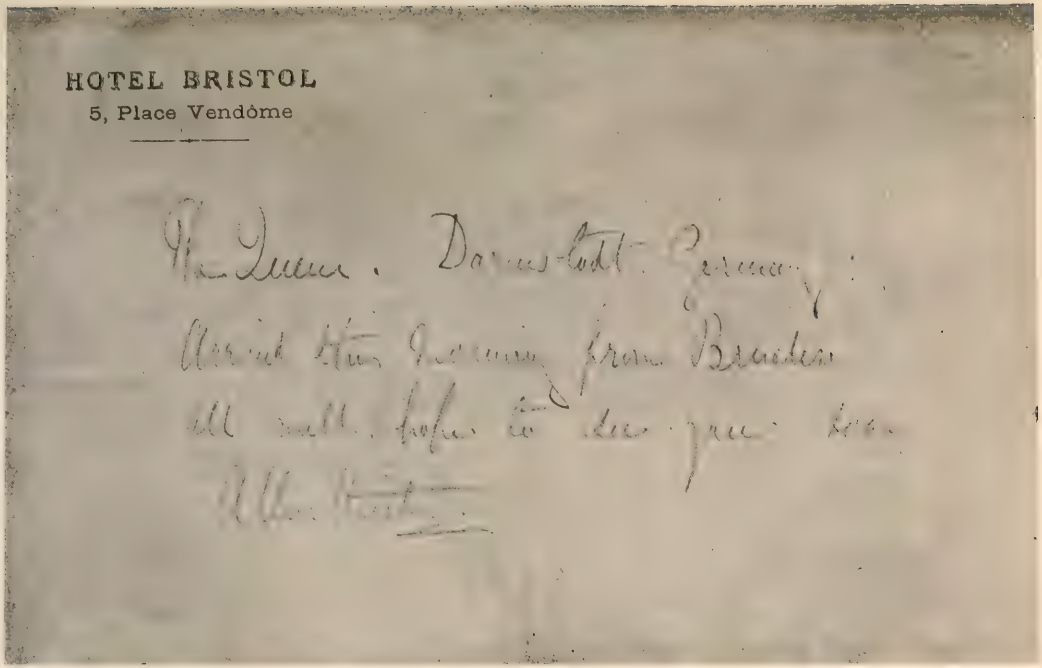
The Duke of Connaught at Moscow to Queen Victoria, Balmoral.

Moscow, *May* 31 1896

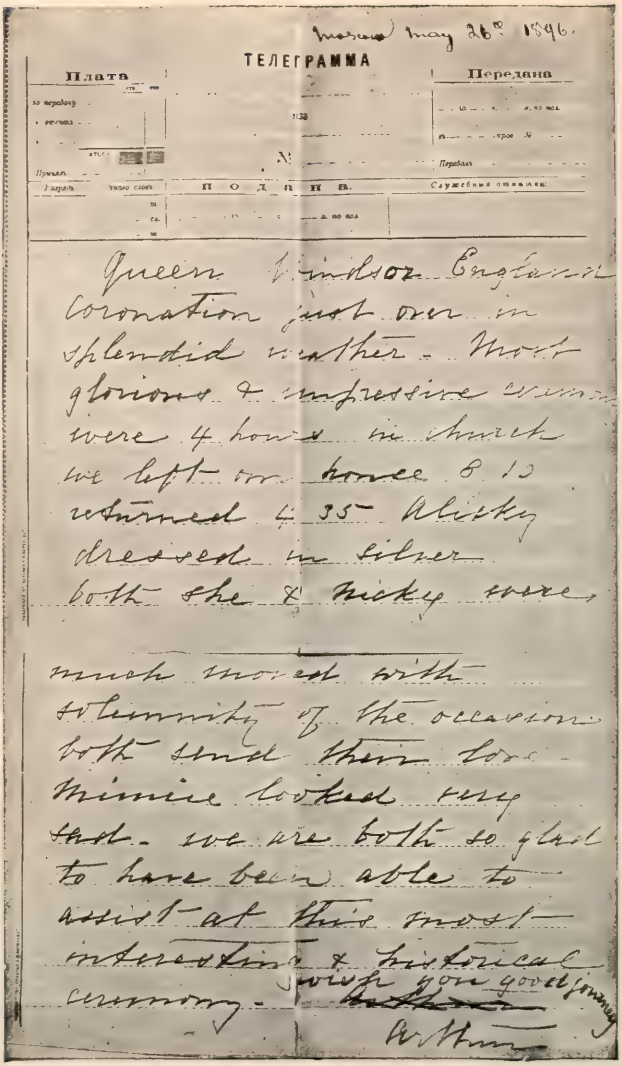
QUEEN, Balmoral, England,—Very deplorable accident occurred at beginning of yesterday's fête hours before arrival of Emperor many peasants crushed to death Accident due over eagerness and entirely fault of people themselves 700,000 people on ground. Very sad.

ARTHUR.

The autograph of the late Prince Albert Victor will some day become exceedingly rare and costly. The only example I have of his writing is the telegram he sent to his grandmother, Queen Victoria, at Darmstadt, from that *caravanserai* of kings, the Hôtel Bristol, in the Place Vendôme, Paris. It is not often that Royalty honours one of those irritating social tortures entitled "An Album of Confessions to Record Thoughts and Feelings." The late Duke of Coburg (Prince Alfred of England) fell a victim to the possessor of one thirty-seven years ago, and the results figured at the modest price of £1 in a London catalogue :—



AUTOGRAPH TELEGRAM FROM THE LATE PRINCE ALBERT VICTOR OF WALES TO HIS GRANDMOTHER, QUEEN VICTORIA.



Moscow May 26th 1896.

ТЕЛЕГРАММА

Плата | Передана

Подана.

Служебныя отмѣтки

Queen Windsor England
Coronation just over in
splendid weather - Most
glorious & impressive ceremony
were 4 hours in church
we left on house 8.10
returned 4.35 Alicky
dressed in silver
both she & Nicky were
much moved with
solemnity of the occasion
both send their love -
Minnie looked very
sad - we are both so glad
to have been able to
assist at this most
interesting & historical
ceremony - wish you good journey
Arthur

HOLOGRAPH TELEGRAM OF THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT TO QUEEN VICTORIA, ST. PETERSBURG, MAY 26, 1896.

CONFESSIONS.

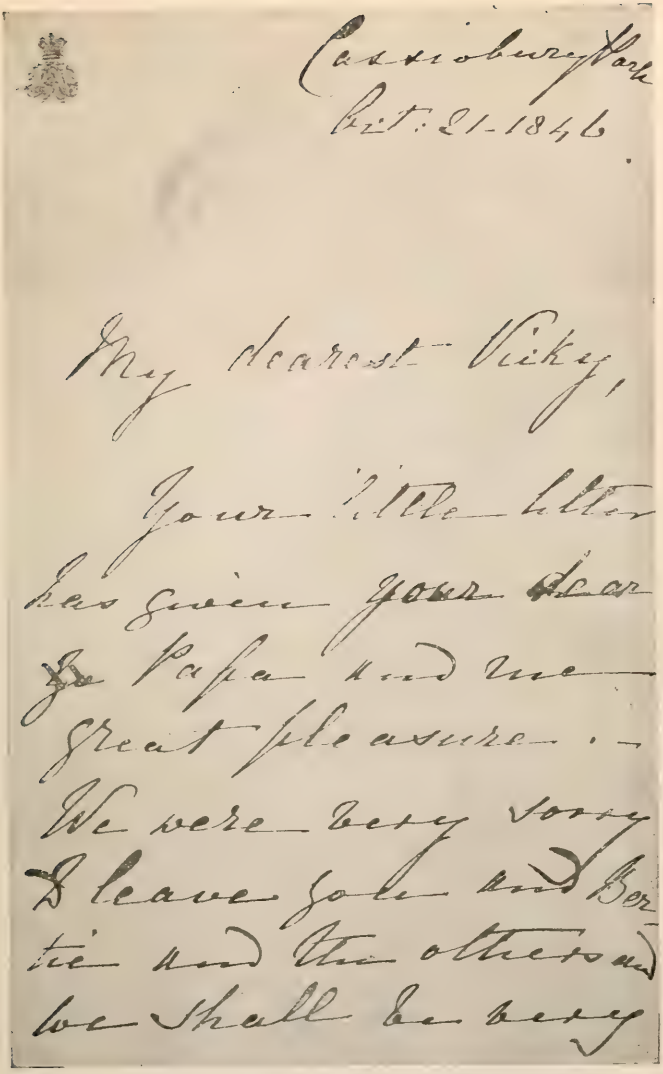
1. Your favourite virtue—Self-denial.
2. Your favourite qualities in man—Decision and hardihood.
3. Your favourite qualities in woman—Dress and paint.
4. Your favourite occupation—Hunting and riding.
5. Your chief characteristic—Good nature.
6. Your idea of happiness—A good wife.
7. Your idea of misery—A mother-in-law.
8. Your favourite colour and flower—White, and lilies of the valley.
9. If not yourself who would you be?—Some one else.
10. Where would you like to live?—In Rome or Vienna.
11. Your favourite prose authors—White-Melville and Lever.
12. Your favourite poets—Moore and Walter Scott.
13. Your favourite painters and composers—Raphael and Mendelssohn.
14. Your favourite heroes in real life—Bayard and Leonidas.
15. Your favourite heroines in real life—Joan of Arc and Boadicea.
16. Your favourite heroes in fiction—"The Claimant" and Lord Rivers.
17. Your favourite heroines in fiction—Mother Gamp and Mrs. Brown.
18. Your favourite food and drink—A mutton chop and a glass of porter.
19. Your favourite names—Cerise, Blanche, Georgiana.
20. Your pet aversion—Flattery.
21. What characters in history do you most dislike?—Gessler and Gambetta.
22. What is your present state of mind?—Doubtful.
23. For what fault have you most toleration?—Vanity.
24. Your favourite motto—"Honi soit qui mal y pense."

ALFRED.

ROME, *February* 16, 1873.

Some years ago, when I first took up autograph collecting as a serious occupation, I bought from Mr. James Tregaskis, of the "Caxton Head," a copy-book of George, Prince of Wales, filled up when he

was in his thirteenth year. Few boys of that age could, in this twentieth century, emulate the copper-plate of the then industrious Heir Apparent. With the copybooks went his first cap and frock, both edged with the daintiest Valenciennes lace. The genuineness of these relics of Royalty was attested by the Dowager Countess of Effingham, Lady-in-Waiting to Queen Charlotte, and their subsequent possessor, Mr. F. Madan, of the Bodleian Library. A little later I purchased the Prince's "exercise-book" of three years later, which begins with an "Extract of the First Oration of Cicero against Catiline, spoken before their Majesties in the Picture Gallery at Windsor, August 12, 1778." At the same time I acquired the Duke of York's "Translations from Terence." On the first page, the student of fifteen writes: "Frederick. This volume begun January 9th, 1778. *Dimidium facti, qui bene cæpit, habet.*" It is sad to think they were within measurable distance of the "Perdita" entanglement of 1780–81. I was already in a position to satisfy the curiosity of the expert of 1827 as to a page of the copy-book, "of the best king that ever lived," but some time later I became the owner of a whole collection of Royal letters relating to the early married life of Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort, and the up-bringing of their elder children. There was nothing of a confidential nature in these MSS. Everything tended to demonstrate the beauty and simplicity of the home-life of the Sovereign at Windsor and Buckingham Palace in the now far away "eighteen-forties," and the care bestowed on the up-bringing of his late Majesty King Edward VII. These documents formed the nucleus of a book, and by the permission of Messrs. Harper & Brothers several

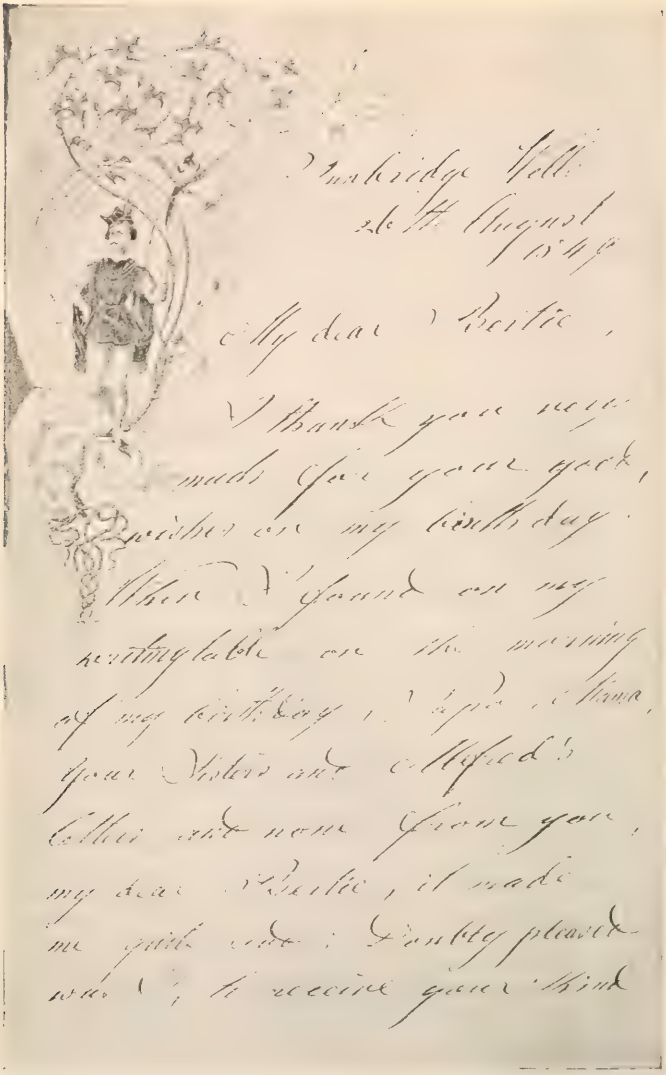

Cassiobury Park
Oct: 21-1846

My dearest Vicky,

Your little letter has given your dear Papa and me great pleasure. We were very sorry to leave Lolo and Bertie and the others and we shall be very

ONE PAGE OF A.L.S. OF QUEEN VICTORIA TO HER ELDER DAUGHTER, AGED SIX, OCTOBER 21, 1846.

(By permission of Harper Brothers.)



FIRST PAGE OF A.L.S. OF THE DUCHESS OF KENT TO HER GRANDSON, KING EDWARD VII., AGED EIGHT, AUGUST 26, 1849.

(By permission of Harper Brothers.)

of them are now reproduced. The *édition de luxe* of this book[1] has been extra-illustrated by two ladies in New York. I have also treated a copy very elaborately in this way, and I venture to think it will make history some day. Many of the "unconsidered trifles" it contains are not likely to be soon met with again, and the *ensemble* reconstitutes the Court atmosphere of 1840–45. In the opening chapters of the "Boyhood of a Great King," I have given a brief account of the upbringing of five generations of the British Royal Family. Since then I have come across an interesting bundle of papers once in possession of the Earl of Holdernesse, for some years governor of the children of George III. In 1776 the King writes thus to Lord Holdernesse:—

Lord Holdernesse,—The opinion I have of your being the most fit Person in all respects to have the direction of the education of my Sons, which I should imagine the many interesting Conversations I have had with you this winter must have thoroughly convinced you, must have prepared you to expect that the contents of your letter would occasion equal sorrow and surprise. If you are determined in the plan you now propose, I have no consolation but in the knowledge of the rectitude of my intention fully to have supported you and that your retreat is not in the least owing to any step taken by me.

George R.

Queen's House *May* 22 1776

Three years previously the Earl, during a period of temporary absence, had received a good many letters from his pupils, in which good feeling

[1] "The Boyhood of a Great King," by A. M. Broadley. Harper & Brothers, London and New York, 1906. *Édition de luxe*, 4to size with additional plates, limited to 125 copies.

seemingly vies with excellence of calligraphy. Here are some examples :—

The Duke of York, aged ten, to his tutor, the Earl of Holdernesse.

KEW *October* 25 1773

MY LORD,—I am glad to here (*sic*) that you are (*sic*) arived safe at last, and I hope that you will finish your business so as to return to us by the sixth. The King and Queen were so good as to send for us on Monday evening quite unexpectedly. I hope your Lordship will be as good as to continue your good wishes to me, and I will try to deserve them. We have not had another letter from Mr. Smelt since you have been gone. The Bishop[1] and Mr. Jackson[2] send their compliments to your Lordship.

My dear Lord, I am always your's

FREDERICK.

Prince William (afterwards Duke of Clarence and King William IV.), aged eight, to the Earl of Holdernesse [1773].

MY LORD,—J'ai eté bien aise d'apprendre que vous avez eu un bon passage et j'espere que tout le reste de votre voyage sera aussi heureux. Nous avons eu un beau feu d'artifice au lieu de bal a la naissance de La Reyne. Je presente mes amitiés à My Lady et a vous My Lord bien des voeux pour votre santé. Je suis impatient de vous revoir et bien sincerement votre tres affectionné ami

GUILLAUME

Prince Edward (afterwards Duke of Kent), aged six, to the Earl of Holdernesse.

MY LORD,—Comme j'ai surement autant d'amitié pour vous que mon frère je pense tout ce qu'il vous a ecrit et je n'y ajoute ceci que pour vous assurer moi meme que je suis aussi veritablement que lui votre tres affectionné ami

EDOUARD.

---

[1] Dr. Hurd, afterwards Bishop of Worcester.

[2] Dr. Cyril Jackson, afterwards Dean of Christchurch.

FIRST PAGE OF A.L.S. OF QUEEN ADELAIDE TO HER GREAT-NIECE, THE LATE EMPRESS FREDERICK OF GERMANY, CIRCA 1848.

(By permission of Harper Brothers.)

granted by His Grace Charles Thomas by divine providence Lord Bishop of Canterbury on the twenty eighth day of February One thousand eight hundred and sixty three in obedience to a warrant directed to him by Her Majesty for that purpose His Royal Highness Albert Edward Prince of Wales Duke of Saxony &c and Her Royal Highness the Princess Alexandra Caroline Maria Charlotte Louisa Julia Daughter of Prince Christian of Denmark were married at the Hon. Pre Chapel of St George within His Castle of Windsor on this Tuesday the tenth day of March in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and sixty three and in the twenty sixth year of Her Majesty's reign. by me

C. T. Cantuar.

This Marriage was solemnized between Us Albert Edward Prince of Wales Duke of Saxony &c and the Princess Alexandra Caroline Maria Charlotte Louisa Julia Daughter of Prince Christian of Denmark on this tenth day of March One thousand eight hundred and sixty three

Albert Edward P.

Alexandra

This Marriage was solemnized in the presence of Us. on the day above mentioned

Victoria R.

Chris. P. of Denmark

Louisa P. of Denm.

Victoria C. Pr. of Prussia Pr. Royal

Alice Pr. of Hesse Pr. of Gt. Britain & Ireland

Helena

Louise

Frederick William Prince of Prussia

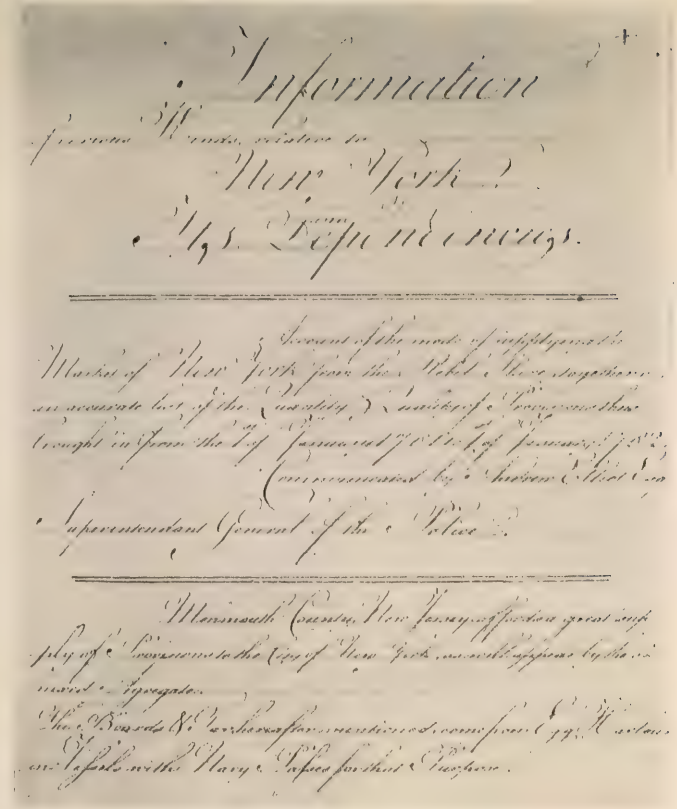
Louis Prince of Hesse

Arthur

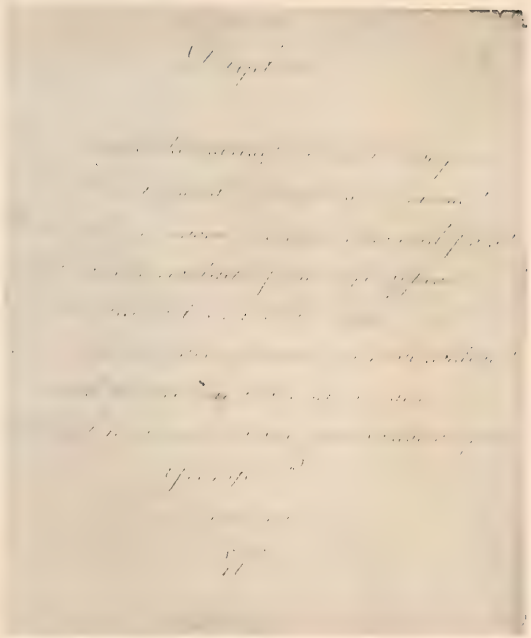
Leopold.

120

PAGE OF REGISTER CONTAINING THE SIGNATURES OF CONTRACTING PARTIES AND WITNESSES AT THE MARRIAGE OF KING EDWARD VII. AND QUEEN ALEXANDRA, 1863.

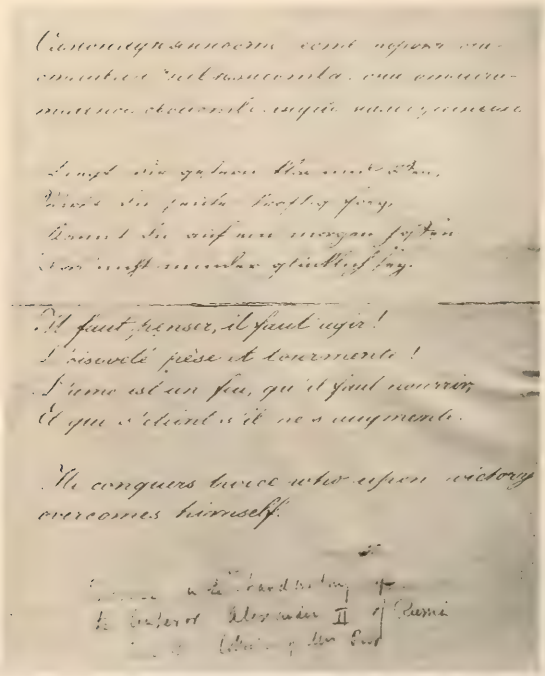


PAGE FROM THE MS. REMARK-BOOK OF PRINCE WILLIAM HENRY (AFTERWARDS KING WILLIAM IV.), IN WHICH HE BEGINS TO DESCRIBE NEW YORK, JANUARY, 1781.



PAGE OF EXERCISE BOOK OF KING GEORGE IV. AT THE AGE OF TWELVE.

DRAWING BY CHARLOTTE, EMPRESS OF MEXICO,
DATED LACKEN, 1850.



A SHEET FROM THE COPY-BOOK OF THE EMPEROR
ALEXANDER II. OF RUSSIA WHEN A BOY.

In the following year the Prince of Wales, aged twelve, thus addresses his absent tutor:—

KEW, *July* 22 1774.

MY DEAR LORD,—I am glad to hear you are so much better, for when you come back again into England I hope your health will be then so strong that you may be then of more use to us than you would have been otherwise. There is a man come from Otaheite with Cap^{n} Furneaux. He is about five foot 10 high almost quite black, his nose is flat like that of the Negroes, his lips are purple. He came to the King and Queen in the habit of his Country which is made of the Cloth of which your Lordship has seen some. In my next letter to you I will give you a fuller description of him. I beg your Lordship will be so good as to give my best wishes to my Lady Holdernesse and my Lady Carmarthen and my compliments to my Lord Carmarthen

My dear Lord,
I am your Faithful Friend
GEORGE P.

The following letter of the Duke of Sussex, aged fourteen, and already at the University of Göttingen, came from the same source:—

DEAR DUNBAR,—I make a thousand excuses for not having wrote to you, but my time is so taken up that it is out of my power. I long very much to see you again. We pass our time very agreeably here as there are many pretty and agreeable Girls . . . . and you know the Company of Ladies is very agreeable. I hope you spend your time with pleasure. Pray write to me where you are and your Employment at present. I can't stay longer to write. Adieu!

Your's ever
AUGUSTUS FREDERICK

Göttingen, *Jan.* 15 1787

The Princess Charlotte, for some years heiress to the British Crown, was apparently as diligent as her

uncles and aunts of the previous generation. The following letter was sold at Sotheby's for a few shillings. It is difficult to imagine the Queen Caroline of the pro-Georgian caricaturist playing blindman's buff with her little daughter! Possibly it afforded her one of the few happy hours of her *vie orageuse*:—

The Princess Charlotte, aged 8 years and 6 months, to her Aunt the Electress Charlotte of Würtemberg.

My dear Aunt,—I am very happy to find by Lady Kingston that you are so good to love me so much and I assure you I love you very dearly for I know a great deal about you from Lady Elgin, who wishes me to resemble you in everything. I am very anxious to write better that I may let you know how I go on in my learning. I am very busy and I try to be very good. I hope to go to Windsor soon and see my Dear Grandpapa and Grandmama. I love very much to go there and play with my aunts. Mama comes very often to see me and then we play at merry games—Colin Maillard.

I am much obliged to you for sending me so many pretty things and wish you and the Elector[1] were here and would bring my cousin Princess Theresa with you.

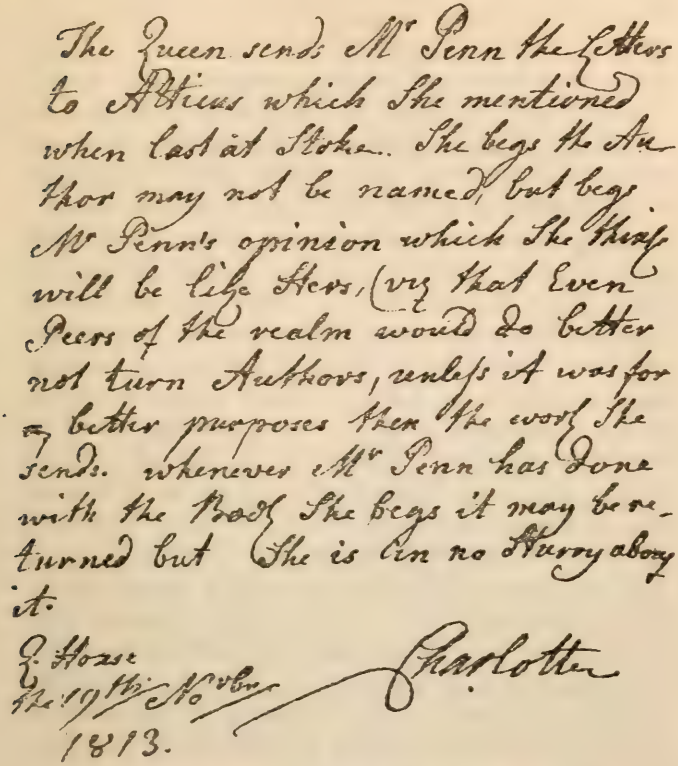
Adieu my dear Aunt and Believe me
Your ever Affectionate and Dutiful Niece
Charlotte

PS.—My duty to the Elector
Shrewsbury Lodge *August* 17 1804

The daughters of George III. and Queen Charlotte were all excellent letter writers, but their ordinary

[1] In May, 1797, the Princess Royal of England married Frederick, Prince of Würtemberg, born in 1754. Later in the year he succeeded to the dukedom on the death of his father. In April, 1803, a decree of Napoleon raised him to the rank of Elector. Hence the title given to her aunt by the young Princess. The Elector subsequently became King of Würtemberg in virtue of the Treaty of Presbourg (January 7, 1806).

letters fetch absurdly low prices, although many of them are historically important. Queen Adelaide, the consort of William IV., was fond of writing texts


The Queen sends Mr Penn the Letters to Atticus which She mentioned when last at Stoke. She begs the Author may not be named, but begs Mr Penn's opinion which She thinks will be like Hers, (viz that Even Peers of the realm would do better not turn Authors, unless it was for better purposes than the work She sends. whenever Mr Penn has done with the Book She begs it may be returned but She is in no Hurry about it.

Q. House
the 19th Novbr
1813.

Charlotte

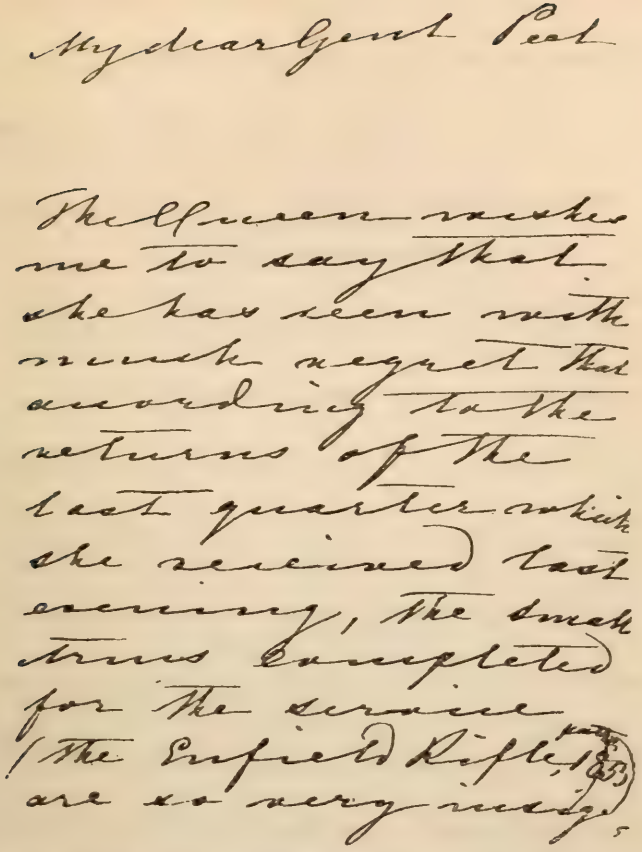
A.L.S. OF QUEEN CHARLOTTE TO MR. PENN, OF PORTLAND, NOVEMBER 19, 1813.

on cards edged with filigree to be sold for philanthropic purposes. Her autographs are, in consequence, exceedingly common. The copy-book, page, and drawing of the still-living Empress Charlotte of

Mexico have a melancholy interest. Her autograph and that of her ill-fated husband sell well abroad. The late Comte de Chambord and the late Comte de Paris wrote better hands as boys than the King of Rome or the Prince Imperial, of whose autographs I shall speak in connection with Napoleonic MSS. The rough sketch of soldiers drawn by the Prince Imperial and the artillery essay written by him at the Royal Military College, Woolwich, certainly form interesting items in that portion of my autograph collection which I label the Copy-books of Kings.

While the present volume was going through the press a most important sale of Royal autographs took place at Sotheby's. At the sale of May 4, 1910, no less a sum than £5,446 6s. was realised for 195 lots. Amongst the letters of Royal personages then dispersed, an A.L.S. of Mary Queen of Scots, dated Chatsworth, June 13, 1570, and addressed to her brother-in-law, Charles IX. of France, fetched £715; a D.S. of Edward VI., £370; an A.L.S. of Queen Mary I., £205; an A.L.S. of Queen Elizabeth, £160; 7 A.L.S. of Catherine de Medicis, £145; a L.S. of Henry VII., £24; a L.S. of Henry VIII., £25; three A.L.S. of Charles I., £55, £49, and £39 respectively, and three A.L.S. of Charles II., £25, £23 10s., and £22 respectively. The account of the expenses incurred at the "Meeting of the Field of the Cloth of Gold," signed by Francis I., was sold for £130.

The following examples of the handwriting of the late Prince Consort, the late King Edward VII., the late Duke of Coburg, King George V., Queen Mary, and the late Empress Frederick of Germany may prove interesting to my readers, as well as useful to collectors:—


My dear Gent Peel

The Queen wishes me to say that she has seen with much regret that according to the returns of the last quarter which she received last evening, the 5 inch Irons completed for the service (The Enfield Rifle, 1853) are so very inadequate

FIRST PAGE OF A.L.S. BY ALBERT, PRINCE CONSORT, TO GENERAL PEEL, 1858.

Nothing more clearly shows the value we attach to our attainments, than the continued efforts we make to maintain them, and improve them.

Albert, Edward P. 17th December 1851

EXERCISE OF THE LATE KING EDWARD VII. WHEN TEN YEARS OLD, DECEMBER 17, 1851.

(By permission of Harper Brothers.)

Let innocence accompany every amusement

Let innocence accompanies every amusement

Let innocence accompany every amusement

Let innocence accompany every amusement

Let innocence accompanies every amusement

Let innocence accompany every amusem

Let inocence accompany amusements L

Let innocence accompany every amusement

Alfred Alfred Buckingham Pallace.

EXERCISE OF THE LATE DUKE OF COBURG (PRINCE ALFRED) AT THE AGE OF EIGHT.

(By permission of Harper Brothers.)

Marlborough House.
Pall Mall. S.W.

Feb 20th /86.

Dear Lady Mandeville

Thanks so
much for your kind
letter & for wishing me
good bye, it is so
nice of you thinking
of me. I am quite
miserable at going away
& leaving everybody I
love at home, but it
can't be helped. I wish
I could have seen
you before I went,
I don't think we have

ONE PAGE OF A.L.S. OF KING GEORGE V. WHEN DUKE OF YORK TO THE LATE DUCHESS DOWAGER OF MANCHESTER, FEBRUARY 22 1886.

J 121 York House.
St James's Palace.
S.W
May 24. 1900.

Dear Willie,

Will you come to see me tomorrow Friday at 5. o'clock to talk over the Cook arrange=

ONE PAGE OF A.L.S. OF QUEEN MARY WHILE DUCHESS OF YORK TO A FRIEND, MAY 24, 1900.

Windsor Castle. Feb. 22
1889.

Dear Mr. Prothero,

I have rec.d both your letters with thanks. I shall be very glad to see Mr. Knowles at 1. tomorrow and should much like to see you at half p. 7.

FIRST PAGE OF A.L.S. OF THE EMPRESS FREDERICK OF GERMANY TO MR. PROTHERO, FEBRUARY 22, 1889.

VI

THE AUTOGRAPHS OF STATECRAFT, SOCIETY, AND DIPLOMACY

CHAPTER VI

THE AUTOGRAPHS OF STATECRAFT, SOCIETY, AND DIPLOMACY

Unpublished letters of the two Pitts, Lord Chesterfield, and Lord Stanhope

"As keys do open chests
So letters open breasts."
JAMES HOWELL (1595–1666).

"LETTERS of affairs from such as manage them, or are privy to them," writes Lord Bacon, "are, of all others, the best instructors for history, and to a diligent reader, the best histories in themselves." Hence the peculiar and exceptional value of the autographs of Statecraft and Diplomacy as important sources of reliable information in dealing with the annals of any given period of national life. Writers like Frederic Masson have discovered that the faded and forgotten correspondence of men and women of fashion constitute a veritable treasury of knowledge concerning the manners and customs of our ancestors during the past three centuries. Almost all the American autographs of great value [1] may be classed in this category. It is obvious that some

[1] See *post*, Chapter XI.

writers, like Lord Chesterfield, united in their persons the attributes of statesmen, diplomatists, and men of fashion.

Eighty years ago it is evident the money value of the letters of celebrated statesmen in no way corresponded with their worth as potential aids to history-making. The chronicler of 1827 already alluded to makes no secret of the fact. "Hands which the reins of empire might have swayed," he frankly confesses, "are hands of very inferior value on paper. Sir Francis Walsingham, the able and upright secretary of Queen Elizabeth, must have five other celebrated persons added to mount up to 9s. The price of the great Sir Robert Walpole, who discovered the price of more than half the House of Commons, and made the whole of the Government run smoothly, is 18s. Mr. Pitt, the Pilot that weathered the storm, and Mr. Perceval, who fell by the ball of an assassin, join hands to reach 13s.; and Lord Castlereagh, who once towered high above the heads of the people, now needs the help of Lord Grenville, and a Lord Chief Justice, to lift him up to a like sum. The average value of a common Lord Chancellor is about 2s. 6d. Lenthall, the Speaker of the House of Commons in the Long Parliament, and Thurloe, the Secretary of Oliver Cromwell, are valued together at 52s. 6d."

I am hardly disposed to altogether credit this statement, as large sums, comparatively speaking, were paid even then for documents signed by Thomas More, the Earl of Pembroke (Shakespeare's friend), and Francis Bacon, who, according to the writer, would be pitilessly relegated to the half-crown class. In Frederic Barker's catalogue for 1887 I find a Privy Council letter, signed by

Bacon and several others, priced at £7 7s., and Mr. Waller, ten years before, offers a 2 p. A.L.S. of the younger Pitt for 18s. It was nevertheless a letter of considerable historical value. In this kind of autographs important finds may often be made by buying letters written by little known personages to eminent politicians. In a recent sale at Sotheby's a dozen letters addressed to William Windham went for 1s. the lot. It is quite possible they may enshrine some unknown State secret. I lately saw at the shop of Messrs. Ellis, in New Bond Street, a deed signed not only by Bacon but his wife, and nearly the whole of his relatives and connections. It is in an excellent state of preservation, and was priced at £30.

At the present moment, when the sixth generation of our Royal Family is represented in the Senior Service, two letters of the elder Pitt, the Great Commoner, arranging for the entry into the Navy of the first Prince of the House of Brunswick to join it, cannot but be interesting. These letters were addressed in 1759 to Lord Holdernesse, and concern the Duke of York, a younger brother of King George III.[1]

William Pitt (afterwards Earl of Chatham) to Lord Holdernesse.
past 5 o'clock
(1758–9 ?).

DEAR LORD,—I have the very great satisfaction to acquaint your Lordship that the King has been graciously pleased to approve that Prince Edward should go on board the fleet and enter into the Department of the Navy. His Majesty, at the same time signifyd his Intentions to the Duke of Newcastle not to allot any appointments to the Prince on this account. Proper representations, however will be made for an allowance for Table at least, which it is hoped will not be without effect.

[1] See *ante*, p. 156.

I am doubly happy, my Dear Lord, at the favourable and speedy determination of this very important arrangement, and cannot do sufficient Justice to the Instant and efficacious attentions paid to the Intentions of Leicester House, which I had the great honour to be commanded to make known.

I am ever
My dear Lord's
most affectionate Friend
and humble servant
W. Pitt

The King reviews the Cavalry Monday next.

William Pitt (afterwards Earl of Chatham).

Monday ½ past 4

My Dear Lord,—I am able to put your mind entirely at ease as to some doubts which seemed to have arisen, by acquainting your Lordship that in consequence of the signification of the King's pleasure by me, the Lords of the Admiralty have ordered Captain Howe *to enter Prince Edward in the Ship's books, as a volunteer for wages and victuals, and his Retinue as part of the allowed complement of the Ship.* This is the Form and puts everything out of doubt. The King is pressing for the Departure of the Expedition, and has named General Bligh to command the Forces. Lord Ligonier is gone to the General to acquaint him of the King's pleasure. I conceive Howe will sail by Thursday at latest if the weather permits. Preparations having been ordered to be made for the Reception of Prince Edward on Board of Captain Howe's own ship, Mr. Cleveland informs me that *everything* will be provided for His Royal Highness's accomodation if Bligh accepts (for such is the style of our army) and the King should approve the Draught of Instructions to be laid before His Majesty tomorrow, nothing but a wind will be wanting.

Prince Ferdinand recommends the continuation of attack on their coasts as *la guerre la plus sensible à la France de l'attaquer dans ses Foyers.* And yet this great Prince is certainly a Stranger to the Common Council, Beckford and *the Buchaneers.* Olmutz may draw into some length; 10,000 men in the Place and old General Marshall defending it with great vigour. I could not possibly see General Elliot this morning,

being obliged to go to Kensington, and I am this evening to be at a meeting by seven. I am,

Ever my dear Lord's
Most Affectionate Friend
W. PITT.

Seven years later, on the afternoon of February 22, 1766, the Premier, after a tempestuous debate, concluded a letter to his wife in the country thus:—

Love to the sweet babes, *patriotic* or not, tho' I hope impetuous William is not behind in feelings of that kind. Send the saddle horses if you please, so as to be in town early tomorrow morning. I propose and hope to execute my journey to Hayes by 11. Your ever loving husband
W. PITT.

The patriotism of William Pitt the younger, born in the very year Prince Edward joined Captain Howe's ship as a "volunteer for wages and victuals," was soon to blossom forth not only in an infantile drama,[1] but in a poem hitherto unpublished, which I had the good fortune to obtain through Mr. F. Sabin. It was the joint work of "impetuous William" and his sister in the spring of 1777, and is in the handwriting of the former:—

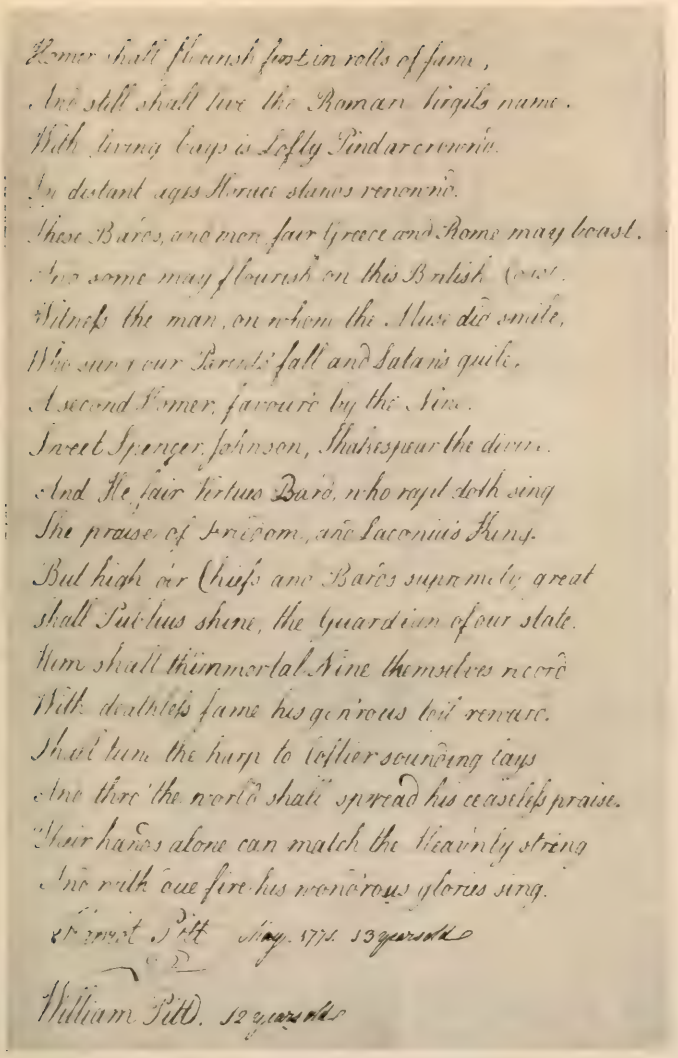
ON POETRY

Ye sacred Imps of thund'ring Jove descend.
Immortal Nine, to me propitious, bend
Inclining downward from Parnassus' brow;
To me, young Bard, some heav'nly fire allow.

[1] Copious extracts from the future Prime Minister's juvenile dramatic production will be given in Dr. J. Holland Rose's forthcoming "Life of Pitt."

From Agannippe's murmur strait repair,
Assist my Labours and attend my Pray'r.
Inspire my Verse. Of Poetry it sings.
Thro' *Her*, the Deeds of Heroes and of Kings,
Renownd in Arms, with Fame immortal stand;
By *Her*, no less, are spread thro' ev'ry Land
Those Patriot names, who in their Country's cause
Triumphant fall, for Liberty and Laws.
Exalted high, the Spartan Hero stands,
Encircled with his far-renowned Bands,
Who e'er devoted for their Country die;
Thro' *Her* their Fame ascends the starry Sky.
She too perpetuates each horrid Deed,
When Laws are trampled, when their Guardians bleed.
Then shall the Muse, to Infamy prolong
Example dread, and theme of trajick Song,
Nor less immortal than the Chiefs resound
The Poets' names, who spread their deeds around.
Homer shall flourish first in rolls of Fame;
And still shall live the Roman Virgil's name.
With living bays is Lofty Pindar crowned,
In distant ages Horace stands renowned.
These Bards, and more, fair Greece and Rome may boast
And some may flourish on this British coast.
Witness the man, on whom the Muse did smile,
Who sung our parents' Fall, and Satan's Guile.
A second Homer, favour'd by the Nine,
Sweet Spenser, Johnson, Shakespear the Divine,
And He, fair Virtue's Bard, who rapt doth sing
The praise of Freedom, and Laconia's King.
But high o'er Chiefs and Bards supremely great
Shall Publius shine, the Guardian of our State.
Him shall th' immortal Nine themselves record
With deathless Fame, his gen'rous toil reward.
Shall tune the Harp to loftier sounding lays
And thro' the world shall spread his ceaseless praise.
Their hands alone can match the heav'nly String
And with due fire his wond'rous glories sing.

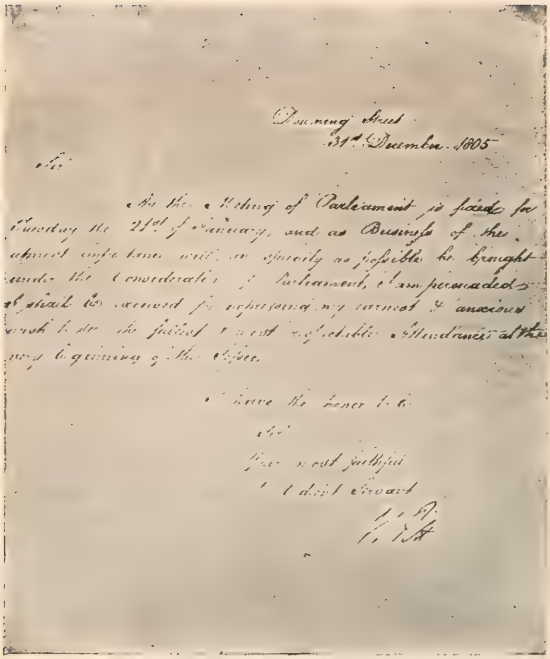
HARRIETT PITT, May 1771, 13 years old.
WILLIAM PITT, 12 years old.


Homer shall flourish first in rolls of fame,
And still shall live the Roman Virgils name.
With living Lays in Lofty Pindar crownd.
In distant ages Horace shines renownd.
These Bards, and more fair Greece and Rome may boast.
And some may flourish on this British Coast.
Witness the man, on whom the Muse do smile,
Who sung our Parents fall and Satans guile.
A second Homer, favourd by the Nine.
Sweet Spenser, Johnson, Shakespear the divine.
And He, fair Virtues Bard, who royal doth sing
The praise of Freedom, and Laconias King.
But high o'er Chiefs and Bards supremely great
Shall Publius shine, the Guardian of our state.
Him shall th'immortal Nine themselves record
With deathless fame his glorious toil reward.
Shall him the harp to loftier sounding Lays
And there the world shall spread his ceaseless praise.
Their hands alone can match the Heavinly string
And with due fire his worthy glories sing.

Robert Pitt May. 1771. 13 years old

William Pitt. 12 years old

LAST PAGE OF UNPUBLISHED HOLOGRAPH POEM IN HANDWRITING OF WILLIAM PITT, MAY, 1771.



Downing Street
31st December 1805

Sir

As the Sitting of Parliament is fixed for Tuesday the 21st of January, and as Business of the utmost importance will immediately be brought under the Consideration of Parliament, I am persuaded it shall be excused for expressing my earnest & anxious wish to see the fullest & most respectable Attendance at the very beginning of the Session.

I have the honor to be
Sir
Your most faithful
& obedt Servant
W. Pitt

LAST WHIP ISSUED BY WILLIAM PITT AND SIGNED BY HIM, DECEMBER 31, 1805.

SIGNATURE OF SIR ISAAC HEARD, GARTER, ON CARD OF ADMISSION TO THE FUNERAL OF WILLIAM PITT 1806.

Here is a letter written by him thirty-three years later, after his return to office on the resignation of Addington. It shows conclusively that his share in helping the Fatherland to weather the storm was physical as well as moral :—

William Pitt in Downing Street to Lieut.-Colonel Dillon of Walmer.

DOWNING STREET, *September* 1, 1804.

MY DEAR SIR,—As the Harvest is now nearly over, I imagine this would be a very fitting time for proposing to assemble your Battalion on permanent duty; and there seems chance enough of the occasion arriving for actual Service, to make it desirable that there should be as little delay as possible. Lord Carrington has gone to Deal Castle to-day, and if you can contrive to see him tomorrow, or next day, I shall be glad if you will settle with him the necessary arrangements. I think the time should not be less than Three weeks, and in that case, an extra allowance will be made of a guinea pr Man, which added to the usual pay will amount to 2s pr day for the whole period. This will enable us to give the men full compensation for at least six or seven hours a day, on an average; and will therefore allow of three or four long Field Days in each week, and only short drills in the remaining days; and such arrangement would, I think, answer every purpose. I should hope you might fix the commencement of permanent duty for Monday fortnight, very soon after which day I hope to come to Walmer to make some stay. I shall be at Dover on Tuesday next for a day, but have some business which will carry me from thence along the Coast, and probably back to town before I reach Walmer.

Believe me, my dear Sir, yours very sincerely,

W. PITT.

In June, 1909, an extraordinary series of letters by Pitt, Burke, and others was offered for sale. They were manifestly of supreme importance to the history of England during one of her most terrible political

crises. I am glad to say certain steps were taken which led to the issue of the following notice :—

SALE OF AUTOGRAPH LETTERS,
June 9th and 10*th.*

WINDHAM CORRESPONDENCE.
Lots 519 *to* 550.

Messrs. SOTHEBY, WILKINSON & HODGE having Sold these Lots privately, by direction of the Executors, they will not be included in the Sale on June 10th.[1]

The patriotism of Pitt certainly finds no echo in the following extraordinary letter of his opponent, Lord Stanhope, which I purchased in Paris for 15 francs :—

The Earl of Stanhope to M. Palloy, Entrepreneur de la demolition de la Bastille, Grenadier Volontier de la 1ere *Division de l'Armée Parisienne, Rue du Fossé St. Bernard, Paris :—*

CHEEVENING HOUSE
near SEVENOAKS KENT
Aout 25 1790

MONSIEUR,—Je vous rend bien des Graces pour votre lettre obligéante du 7e courant. On vous a mal informé quand on vous a dit que nous avions à notre fête à Londres un Chapiteau d'une des Colonnes de la Bastille ; ce n'était point partie d'une colonne ; mais seulement une vraie pierre de la Bastille, comme nous nous sommes assurés. Je ne profiterez

[1] A large number of unpublished letters of William Pitt and his contemporaries will also appear in Dr. Holland Rose's forthcoming "Life of Pitt."

[*sic*] donc, par de votre trés obligéante offre, mais je ne vous en suis par moins obligé. Je me rejouis, chaque jour de la demolition de la Bastille et de la Liberté des Français

Je suis, Monsieur,
Votre très humble et obeissant serviteur
STANHOPE

à M Palloy

A year or so ago I was lucky enough to secure the official dispatch-box bearing the Royal cipher and his initials, which Pitt left behind him at Bath, when returning to Putney a few days before his death. In it is his last Whip, signed on December 31, 1805. On January 21st he was dying, and on the 23rd he died. This melancholy document now lies within the forgotten dispatch-box!

Chesterfield—the "great" Earl of Chesterfield—died when the younger Pitt was fourteen years old. It is more correct to describe him as a contemporary of his father, the Great Commoner. He was, as an amusing and able letter-writer, superior to both, but he loved society and they did not. In the recent Haber Sale at New York (December 10, 1909) a very fine Chesterfield letter only fetched £3 8s. It is thus described:—

CHESTERFIELD (PHILIP DORMER STANHOPE, FOURTH EARL OF). A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to, London, June 14, 1746. (Endorsed on the back "*To Thos. Prior.*") With portrait.

Thomas Prior was the Irish philanthropist, with whom Earl Chesterfield became acquainted while Viceroy of Ireland.

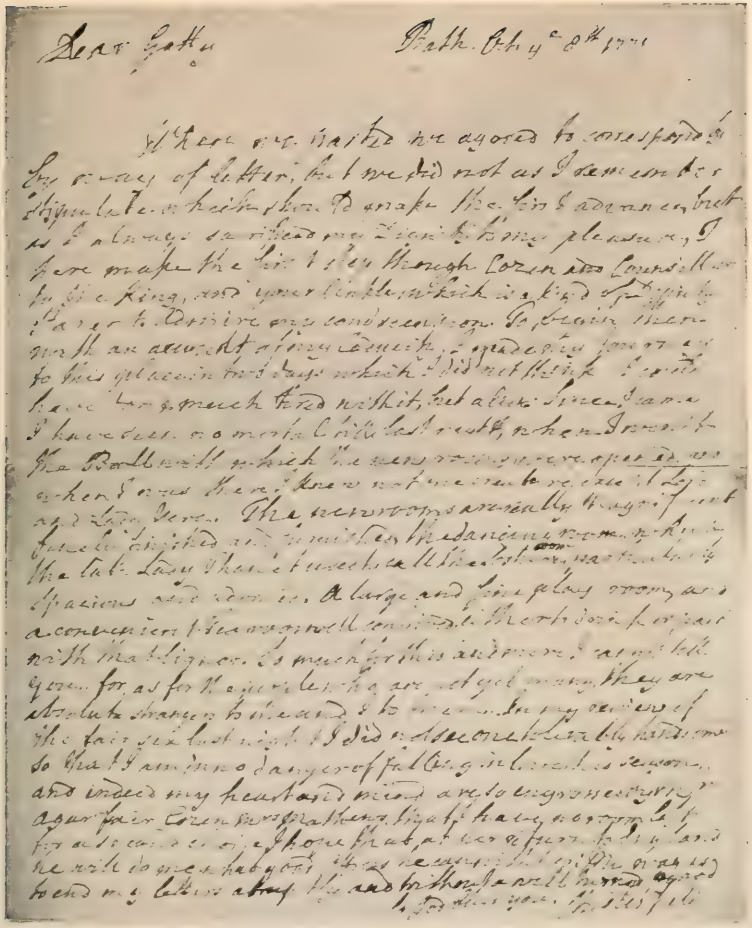
A remarkable letter proposing schemes for manufactures in Ireland. He first suggests glass manufacture, and next writing and printing paper, and states that the specimens shown him of Irish manufacture impressed

him greatly, and only "*industry is wanting*"; another suggestion is the manufacture of starch, and he writes that he has been shown a method of making it from potatoes easily and cheaply, and while the law in England prevents it being made from anything else than flour in that country, that law might not apply in Ireland, and proceeds: "*These are the Jobbs that I wish the People in Ireland would attend with as much Industry and Care as they do Jobbs of a very different Nature.*" Many other reflections show sound common sense.

Two years ago I gave £4 each for five unknown and unpublished letters, written between 1762 and 1771 by Chesterfield to his relative, Mr. Welbore Ellis Agar ("Gatty"). The specimen I now give of them is interesting, as it concerns Bath, a city which I regard as the great source and centre of the lighter and more gossipy letters of the eighteenth century :—

BATH, *October ye 8th* 1771.

DEAR GATTY,—When we parted we agreed to correspond by way of letter, but we did not as I remember stipulate which should make the first advance, but as I always sacrificed my Dignity to my pleasure, I here make the first step though Cozen and Counsillor to the *King* and your Unkle, which is a kind of Deputy Parent. Admire my condescension. To begin, then, with an account of my Caducity. I made my journey to this place in two days, which I did not think I could have done, much tired with it but alive. Since I came I have seen no mortal till last night, when I went to the Ball with which the new rooms were opened and when I was there I knew not one creature except Lord and Lady Vere. The *new rooms* are really Magnificent finely finished and furnished, the Dancing-room, which the Lady Thanet used to call the Posture-room, particularly spacious and adorned. A large and fine play room, and a convenient Tea room well contrived, either to drink or part with that liquor. So much for this and more I cannot tell you, for as for the people who are not yet many, they are absolute strangers to me, and I to them. In my review of the fair sex last night I did not see



A.L.S. OF EARL OF CHESTERFIELD, OCTOBER 8, 1771, DESCRIBING THE INAUGURAL BALL AT THE NEW BATH ASSEMBLY ROOMS.

one tolerably handsome, so that I am in no danger of falling in love this season, and indeed my heart and mind are so engrossed by Mr. Agar's fair cousin *Mrs. Mathews*, that I have no room left for a second choice. I hope that at her return to England, he will do me what good offices he can with her ; my way is to end my letters abruptly, and without a well-turned period.

So God bless you
CHESTERFIELD.

The Mrs. Mathews alluded to in the letter was probably the wife of Captain Mathews, who afterwards fought a duel with Richard Brinsley Sheridan.

Here is another Chesterfield letter from a different source :—

Earl of Chesterfield to Mrs. Montague, May 14, 1771.

Lord Chesterfield presents his respects to Mrs. Montague and desires her to accept of the enclosed trifle for her poor women ; his charity purse is at present as light as hers can possibly be, not from being as formerly his Play-purse too but from the various applications of wretched objects which humanity cannot withstand.

Of the early nineteenth-century statesmen letter-writers Brougham was one of the most prolific, but I have already spoken of a curious "find" of somewhat sensational Brougham correspondence in Paris.[1] His ordinary letters only fetch from 3s. to 5s. Far more costly are the letters of Curran, Grattan, and O'Connell. Here is a typical letter of the "Liberator," written from Bath :—

Daniel O'Connell to Mr. W. H. Curran.

BATH, *October* 14, 1817.

MY DEAR CURRAN,—I have wept over your letter. Oh God your Father never offended me,—we once differed on

[1] See *ante*, pp. 98–99.

the subject of the details of our Petition, but if my information on facts respecting that detail was not superior to his, I feel my inferiority in every other respect too sensibly to dare to differ with him. As Brutus was called the last of the Romans so Ireland will weep over him as the last survivor of those great spirits who *almost* burst the iron Bondage of Britain and would have made her free but that the ancient curse has still bound her and she lingers *yet* in slavery. How naturally does the thought fly from his bed of sickness to the sorrows of Ireland. The Boldest, best, most eloquent, most enthusiastic, and perhaps more than the most persevering of her Patriots, he was. Alas he leaves none like or second to him. You will my friend think I declaim while I only run rapidly through the thoughts that his illness crowds upon me. You do well, quite well. It will, in every respect, console you to recollect that you have done your *duty*. I rejoice with all the joy of my heart can mingle with his state that you have this precious opportunity of doing that duty cordially and well. If your letter afforded me hope that I could see your Father, so as to be able to converse with him, I would answer your letter in person, as it is I wait only your reply to go to you. It would suit most convenient not to leave this before Saturday, but your reply will command me. The Funeral must be Public. I will of course attend it. We will arouse everything Irish in London and pay a tribute to *his* memory unequalled by any which London has witnessed. Tell Phillips I only wait a *reply* to join you both. Do you think of conveying his remains to Ireland? this if practicable would be best. Write, or get Phillips to write, as soon as you receive this. You perceive that I write in the extreme of haste, but I am for ten thousand reasons convinced that you should listen to no suggestion of a private funeral. You would repent it only once, that is all your life. Would to God I could offer you consolation.

Believe me, my dear friend, to be most faithfully yours,

DANIEL O'CONNELL.

Mr. Gladstone was, like Wellington and Brougham, a writer of innumerable letters. There was a demand for them once, but at the present moment, by the irony of fate, an average Gladstone letter fetches less

than one of his wife. Special circumstances, however, may give them special value. This is exemplified in the case of the Gladstone-Manning correspondence written from Balmoral, which I found at Brighton. The introduction of the economical and space-saving postcard spoiled Gladstone as a letter-writer in his old age. Here is a typical letter of his, relating to the present of a bust of O'Connell and interesting at the present political juncture :—

Mr. Gladstone to Mrs. O'Connell.

10 DOWNING STREET *January* 28. 1882.

MY DEAR MADAM,—I accept with many thanks the Bust you have been so kind to send me. It is a most interesting memorial of early days, and of a man of powerful mind and will, and profound attachment to his Country ; whose name can never be forgotten there.

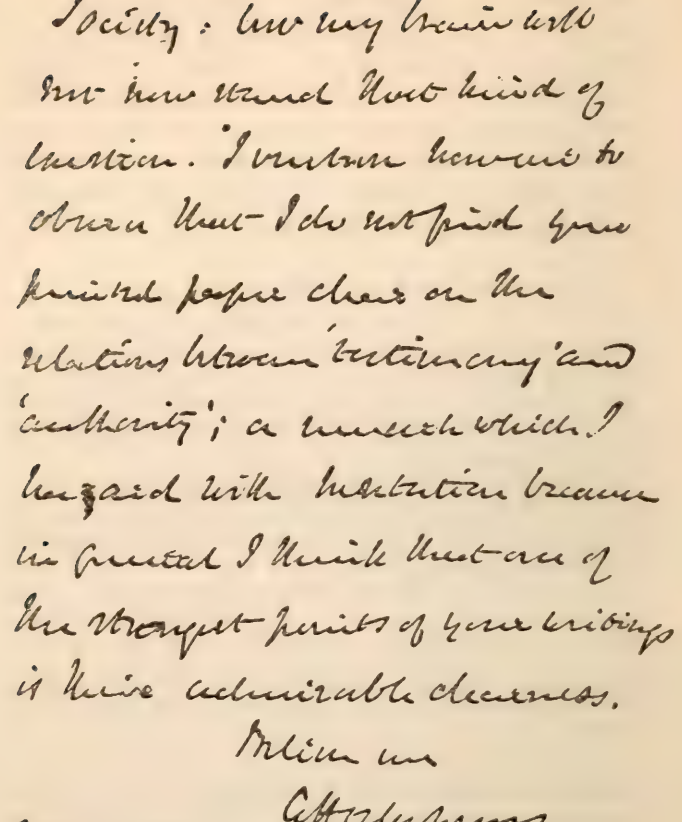
In my early years of Parliamentary life, casual circumstances brought me into slight personal relations with Mr. O'Connel, and I have ever retained the lively recollection of his courtesy and kindness.

I remain, my dear Madam, your very faithful and obedient,

W. E. GLADSTONE.

I must not omit to thank you for the kind terms in which you speak of my efforts on behalf of Ireland, and I cling in that confidence to the hope that a happy future is yet in store for her.

Four years ago I saw ten letters of the late Lord Beaconsfield catalogued at £70. Personally I regard him as almost the last of the now extinct race of letter-writers, for the epistolary art has succumbed beyond hope of recovery to the combined influences of the telegraph, the telephone, the type-writer and the halfpenny newspaper. A "newspaper" letter, as Mrs. Montagu, Lord Lyttelton, and Lord Bath used to call them, would be as ridiculous as a



ONE PAGE OF A.L.S. FROM MR. W. E. GLADSTONE AT BALMORAL TO CARDINAL MANNING, N.D.

conversation on *les belles lettres*. How Lord Beaconsfield's life is ever to be written with any hope of completeness, I cannot imagine. *Hundreds* of his letters have been sold since his death, and a specimen of average interest can now be obtained for 20s. or less. I have gradually acquired thirty or forty and am certain that sooner or later a rise in price is inevitable. People will soon discover that in the fragmentary and wholly unsatisfactory published collections of Beaconsfield's letters *the originals have been ruthlessly mangled or transformed.* I shall only include two examples in this book, beginning with a very early one from the inevitable Bath :—

Benjamin Disraeli to his Sister.

(Franked by E. Lytton Bulwer.)

BATH, *Thursday* [*Jany* 24 1833]

MY DEAREST,—You ought to have rec[d] my letter on Sunday and I should have answered your's immediately, but it is almost impossible to get a frank out of Bulwer and I thought my father w[d] go quite mad if he received an unprivileged letter under present circumstances. We quit this place tomorrow and sh[d] have done so to-day, but dine with a Mr. Murray here. I like Bath very much. At a public ball I met the Horfords, Hawksleys etc. Bulwer and myself went in very late and got quite mobbed.

I have nearly finished Iskander, a very pretty thing indeed, and have printed the 1st Vol of Alroy.

I have answered the agric. affair which was forwarded to me from London.

Directly I am in town I will write about the bills.

The Horfords (father and brother here) asked us to dine, but were engaged.

Met the Bayntums, but not Clementina. Rather think I may to day.

yrs ever
B. D.

Let me have a letter in Duke S[t]. Bulwer is getting on

immensely and I sh[d] not be surprised if we shortly see him in a *most eminent* position, but this not to be spoken of. Met Ensor.

Omitting many letters of piquant interest I come to one written in the autumn of 1851, in which the rising statesman deals somewhat severely with his old friend, *The Times*. It runs as follows :—

HUGHENDEN, *Sept* 19 1851

MY DEAR SA,—Your mischance was very vexatious, but I was glad to hear that you had arrived all safe in such kind quarters.

I see Jem on Tuesday, who passed a longish morning here.

At Monday I was at Aylesbury where I was obliged to dine with the old society—Lowndes, Stone, Howard Wyse, Bernard, Hale, Isham, and Young of Quainton and 3 clergymen supported me, and Lowndes of Chesham in the chair. I made a good speech on a difficult subject, and the meeting seemed in heart. I saw to-day in *The Times* two columns of incoherent and contradictory nonsense w[h] made me blush, tho' I ought to be hardened by this time on such subjects. I have seen no other papers. They can't be worse, and perhaps may in some degree neutralise the nonsense of *The Times*. I am only afraid the world will think it all Delphi and diplomatic, and that the wordy obscurity was intentional, whereas I flattered myself I was as terse and simple as suited a farmer's table.

I am rather improving and getting on a little.

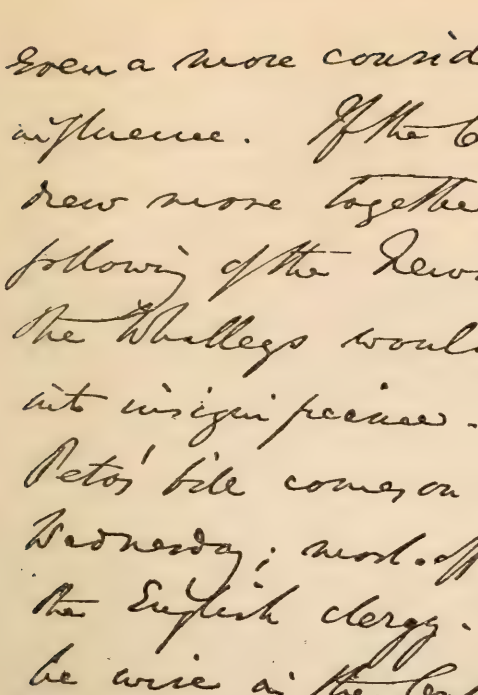
I hope you will enjoy yourself very much.

We went over to Cliefden the other day—there is one bed of flowers, called the scarlet ribbon—4,000 geraniums—the Duchess's[1] own design, very new and wonderful, winding over a lawn like a sea-serpent, but the plantation in sad order. The gardener has £10 per week to pay everything in his department, as the Duchess will not spend more on a place which yields nothing. My kind remembrances to Mrs. Peacock.

Affec[ly] yrs.

D.

[1] The late Duchess of Cleveland, one of Queen Victoria's bridesmaids.



ONE PAGE OF A.L.S. OF MR. DISRAELI (AFTERWARDS LORD BEACONSFIELD) ON CHURCH MATTERS, N.D.

I venture to think that in the near future the letters of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield, will be found as essential to the annals of the Victorian era, as those of Pitt, Windham, and Burke are to those of the reign of George III.

VII

THE LITERARY AUTOGRAPHS OF THREE CENTURIES

CHAPTER VII

THE LITERARY AUTOGRAPHS OF THREE CENTURIES

From the days of Shakespeare and Spenser to those of Thackeray, Dickens, Tennyson, and Meredith—The value of literary autographs and MSS.

In a man's letters, you know, Madame, his soul lies naked —his letters are only the mirror of his heart.—DR. JOHNSON to MRS. THRALE.

Political interest is ephemeral, but literary interest is eternal.—ADRIAN H. JOLINE, "Meditations of an Autograph Collector."

BY a felicitous coincidence two literary autographs of more than ordinary interest have come to light at the moment I was preparing to write the present chapter. The first is the discovery in the Record Office by Dr. Wallace of the signed deposition of Shakespeare in an early seventeenth-century lawsuit, under the circumstances picturesquely set forth in the issue of *Harper's Monthly Magazine* for March, 1910. Without conceding to Dr. Wallace's "find" the supreme importance claimed for it by this able and patient examiner of ancient MSS., there can be no doubt that it deals a fatal and final blow to the Baconian theory. On the very day I read Dr. Wallace's article, Mr. J. H. Stonehouse[1] showed me

[1] Manager of Messrs. Sotheran's, 37, Piccadilly.

several fictitious Shakespeare signatures fabricated by W. H. Ireland nearly forty years after the appearance of "Vortigern," for the avowed purpose of demonstrating his ability to imitate them. I cannot help thinking that Dr. Wallace's article lends increased interest to the letter of the Shakespearean actor, Dowton, which has already been alluded to in these pages.[1] In the elaborate essay in which the fifth Shakespeare signature has been enshrined will be found reproductions of the other four.[2]

Mr. Adrian Joline's theory as to the "eternity of interest" in literary autographs receives support from the exceptionally high prices they have commanded from the early days of the collection of

THE SIGNATURE OF SHAKESPEARE ON THE LAST PAGE OF HIS WILL.

MSS., when the signatures of kings and statesmen were almost at a discount. "I shall now," writes the chronicler of autograph prices in 1827, "set poetry, philosophy, history, and works of imagination against sceptres, swords, robes, and big-wigs. . . . Addison is worth £2 15s., Pope £3 5s., and Swift £3. Thomson has sold for £5 10s. and Burns for £3 10s. Churchill, the abuser of his compatriots, is valued at £1 18s. In philosophy Dr. Franklin reaches £1 17s.; in history, Hume is valued at £1 18s. and Gibbon at only 8s. The sturdy moralist Johnson ranks at £1 16s., the graceful trifler Sterne at £2 2s., Smollett at £2 10s., and Richardson at £1. Scott only yields

[1] See *ante*, Chapter IV., p. 109.

[2] See my own article in *The Outlook*, March, 1910.

8s." In the half-century which intervened between 1827 and 1877 the prices of literary autographs had risen by leaps and bounds. In his catalogue of 1876 Mr. Waller asked £8 10s. for a short Latin essay of Thomas Gray, while Longfellow is priced at £1 18s., George Borrow at £3 3s., and Wordsworth at £1 1s. A fine letter of Schiller's is priced at £2 5s. In the next catalogue (1878) I find the following: Gibbon (a fine A.L.S.) £4 4s.; Voltaire (a 2 pp. A.L.S.) £3 15s.; Rousseau, a series of letters, including one of the philosopher, £3 10s.; five verses by Scott, £4 4s.; William Cowper, A.L.S., £3 7s. 6d.; Gray, a bundle of printed matter including one hundred lines of MS., £6 6s. In the late Mr. Frederick Barker's catalogues of the same period we have Edmund Burke (A.L.S.), £3 3s.; Thomas Hood (A.L.S.), £2 2s.; Voltaire (A.L.S.), £4 4s.; Horace Walpole (A.L.S.), £3 5s.; and a love-letter from John Keats to Fanny Brawne, £28.

In cataloguing the last-named item Mr. Barker says "that one of these celebrated letters realised by auction a short time since no less than £47." He also prices two A.L.S. of Robert Burns at £35 and £32 respectively. It will be remembered that in 1827 the price for a Burns letter was £3 10s. only. For a letter of Schiller (4 pp., 8vo, 1801) Mr. Barker asks £7 7s. In several catalogues of this period I find Keats letters averaging £20 to £30. The interesting catalogue issued by Mr. Barker in 1891 is remarkable for its wealth of literary *rariora*. Autograph letters are priced in it as follows: Schiller, £10 10s.; Burns, £25; Wordsworth, £3 3s.; Thackeray, £25. The last-named letter is worth describing. It was addressed to Miss Holmes, with a postscript on the inside of the envelope, and on the

third sheet a clever sketch of Thackeray and Bulwer Lytton standing behind a lady seated at a piano. The letter itself runs thus :—

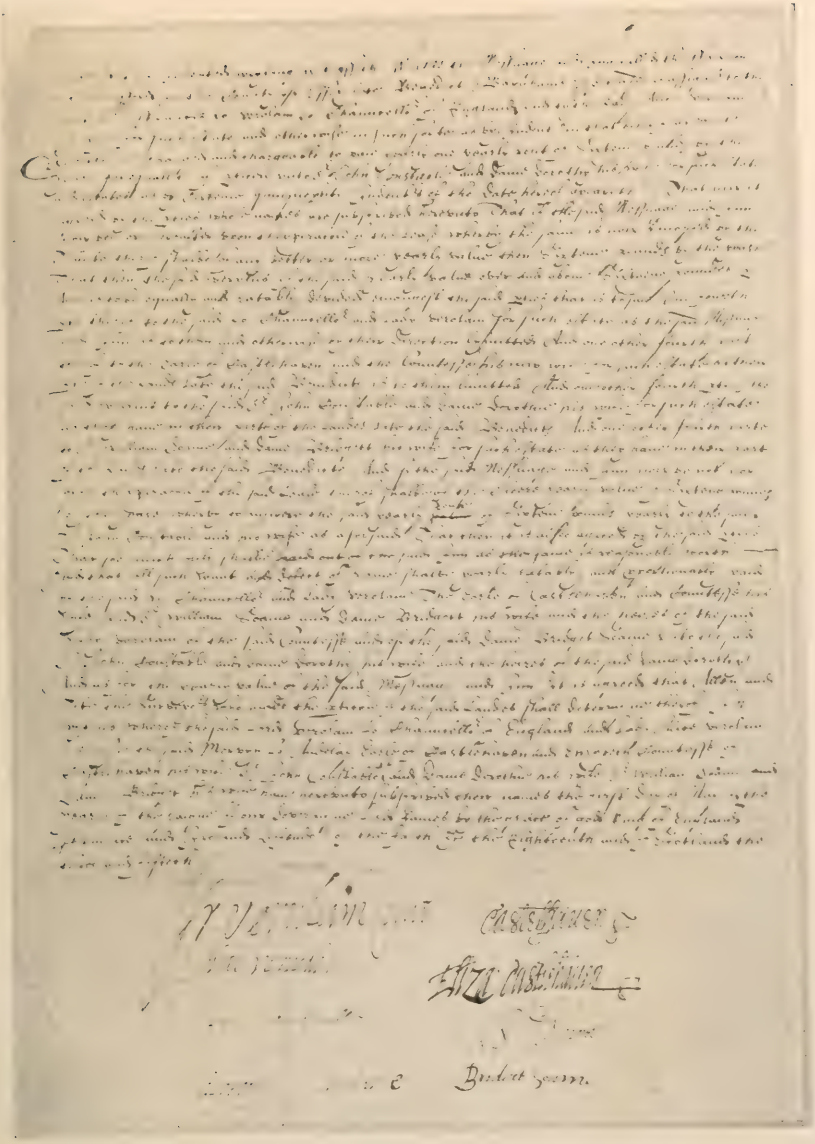
There is a comfortable Hotel in this street, kept by a respectable family man, the charges are Beds gratis, Breakfasts, thank you, dinner and tea, ditto, servants included in these charges. Get a cab from the station, and come straightway to No. 13. I dine out with the Dean of St. Paul's (you have heard of a large meeting house we have between Ludgate Hill and Cheapside, with a round roof?). Some night we will have a select T party, but *not* whilst you are staying here. When you are in your lodgings. Why I will ask Sir Edward George Earle Lytton, Bulwer Lytton himself. Bulwer's boots are very fine in the accompanying masterly design (refer to the sketch), remark the traces of emotion on the cheeks of the other author (the notorious W. M. T.), I have caricatured Dr. Newman (with an immense nose) and the Cardinal too, you ought to know that.

This letter would be now worth quite £50, and some of the fine illustrated Thackeray letters now in possession of Mr. Frank Sabin would probably be cheap at £100 each. Mr. Sabin's collection of the Thackerayana is probably unrivalled both as regards the United Kingdom and America.[1]

In Mr. Barker's 1891 catalogue there are four letters of Shelley, priced at £18 18s., £19 19s., £10 10s., and £9 9s. respectively. There is also a Schiller at £25, and an Alexander Pope covering one page 8vo only at £8. Darwin is already at £1 10s., Disraeli at 18s., and the Dickens letters average about £2. A letter of Dr. Priestley, worth perhaps 5s. in 1827, is now offered at £2 2s.

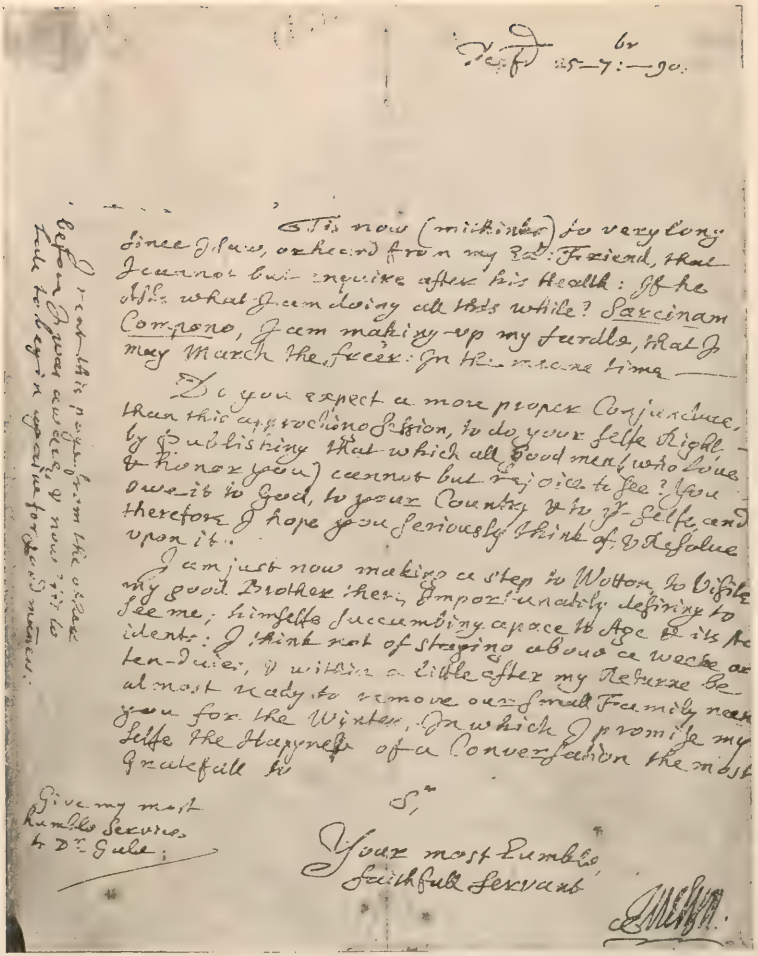
I am permitted by Mr. F. Sabin to reproduce

[1] See *post*, p. 220.



DEED CONTAINING THE SIGNATURE OF FRANCIS BACON, LORD VERULAM, AND NEARLY ALL THE MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY, TEMP. JAMES I.

(In the collection of Messrs. Ellis.)



Deptford 25-7:-90.

'Tis now (mithinks) so very long since I saw, or heard from my Ex: Friend, that I cannot but enquire after his Health: If he Asks what I am doing all this while? Sarcinam Compono, I am making up my Fardle, that I may March the freer: In the meane time ——

Do you expect a more proper Conjuncture, than this approching Session, to do your selfe Right, by Publishing that which all Good men (who love & honor you) cannot but rejoice to see? You owe it to God, to your Country & to yt selfe, and therefore I hope you seriously think of, & Resolve upon it.

I am just now making a step to Wotton to Visite my good Brother there, Importunately desiring to see me; himselfe succumbing apace to Age & its Accidents: I think not of staying above a weeke or ten-dues, & within a little after my Returne be almost ready to remove our small Family near you for the Winter, In which I promise my selfe the Happyness of a Conversation the most Gratefull to

Sr

Your most humble, faithfull Servant

Evelyn.

I read this page from the other before I was aware, & now 'tis too late to begin again for good manners.

Give my most humble Service to Dr Gale.

A.L.S. OF JOHN EVELYN TO SAMUEL PEPYS, DEPTFORD, SEPTEMBER 25, 1790.

(In the collection of Mr. Frank Sabin.)

a very early literary letter addressed in 1690 by John Evelyn to Samuel Pepys. It must not be forgotten that Evelyn was one of the earliest collectors of MSS.

DEPFD, 25—7:—90.

'Tis now (methinks) so very long since I saw or heard from my Ex^t Friend: that I cannot but enquire after his Health: If he aske what I am doing all this while? *Sarcinam compono*, I am making up my fardle, that I may march the freer: for the meane time—

Do you expect a more proper Conjuncture than this approaching Session, to do yourself Right—by publishing that which all good men (who love and honour you) cannot but rejoice to see? you owe it to God, to your Country & to yr Selfe, and therefore I hope you seriously think of & resolve upon it.

I am just now making a step to Wotton to Visite my good Brother there, Importunately desiring to see me: himselfe succumbing apace to Age and its Accidents: I think not of staying above a week or ten daies, & within a little after my returne be almost ready to remove our small family neerer you for the winter, In which I promise myselfe the Hapynesse of a Conversation the most Gratefull to

S^r
Your Most Humble
Faithfull Servant
J EVELYN

I rent this page from the other before I was aware, and now tis to full to begin againe for good mañers.

Give my most Humble Service to Dr. Gule.

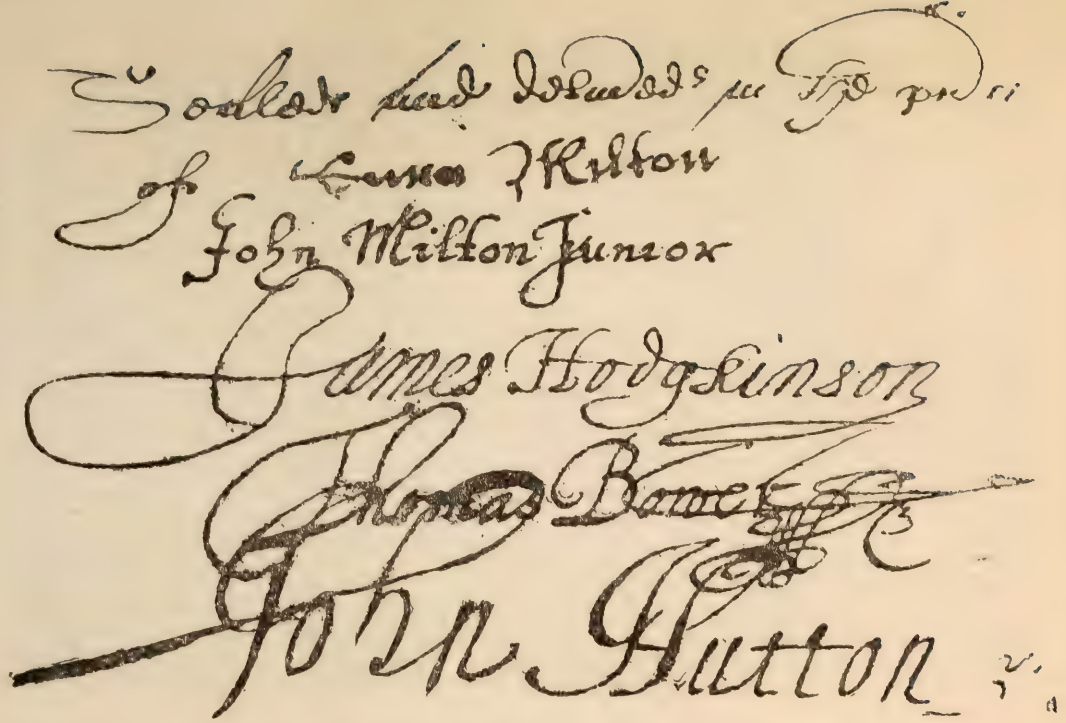
Milton, to a certain extent, was a contemporary of both Pepys and Evelyn, but he had been dead sixteen years at the date of the letter now quoted. The value of Milton's autographs is fully discussed by Dr. Scott in the pages of *The Archivist*.[1] When the subject first attracted my

[1] March, June, September, and December, 1892.

attention early in 1904 much excitement was caused by the appearance in Sotheby's Salerooms of what was alleged to be 32 pp. of the MS. of "Paradise Lost." The value of the document was warmly discussed at the time and sensational bidding was anticipated. It was bought in, but I believe it was ultimately sold to an American collector for £5,000 or thereabouts. Mr. Quaritch now possesses a very fine Milton deed, which is priced at £420, and is dated November 27, 1623. It is signed by John Milton, as one of the witnesses to the Marriage Covenant between Edward Phillips of London and Anne, daughter of John Milton, Citizen and Scrivener of London.

Letters of Dryden and Cowley have fetched very high prices,[1] and the autograph of Edmund Waller is also rare, but Alexander Pope's letters are abundant, although they are much less valuable than those of Swift. A good letter of Pope can be obtained for from £7 to £10. The late Mr. Frederick Barker told me he was once asked as an autographic expert to advise a well-known nobleman, Lord H., who said he had a bundle of letters written by *one of the Popes* in his possession and desired to ascertain their value, but as they were merely signed "A Pope" he did not know which of the Holy Fathers was responsible for them! Mr. Barker of course identified the "bard of Twickenham" as their author. They were bound up under his supervision, and fetched over £200, but still the owner was not quite satisfied! Of the four Pope letters in my collection, only one has ever been published, and that but partially. It is of such manifest historical

[1] From £30 upwards.



EARLY SIGNATURE OF JOHN MILTON ON DOCUMENTS NOW IN POSSESSION OF MR. QUARITCH.

interest that I do not apologise for reproducing it in its entirety:—

Alexander Pope at Twickenham to Ralph Allen, Esq., Widcombe, Bath.

(*November* 2. 1738.)

Dear Sir,—I trouble you with my answers to the Inclosed wch I beg you to give to Mr Lyttelton as I wd do him all ye Good I can, wh the Virtues I know him possest of, deserve ; and therefore I wd Present him with so Honest a Man as you, and you with so Honest a man as he : The Matter concerning Urns I wd gladly leave in yr Care, and I desire four small ones with their Pedestals, may be made, and two of a size larger. I'l send those sizes to you and I send a Draft of ye two sorts, 4 of one and 2 of ye other. I am going to insert in the body of my Works, my two last Poems in Quarto. I always Profit myself of ye opinion of ye publick to correct myself on such occasions. And sometimes the Merits of particular Men, whose names I have made free with for examples either of Good or of Bad, determine me to alteration. I have found the Virtue in you more than I certainly knew before till I had made experiment of it, I mean Humility ! I must therefore in justice to my own conscience of it bear testimony to it and change the epithet I first gave you of *Low-born*, to *Humble*. I shall take care to do you the justice to tell everybody this change was not made at yours, or at any friends request for you : but my own knowledge (of) you merited it. I receive daily fresh proofs of your kind remembrance of me. The Bristol waters, the Guinea Hens, the Oyl and Wine (two Scripture benedictions) all came safe except ye wine, wch was turned on one side, and spilt at ye Corks. However tis no loss to *me* for that sort I dare not drink on acct of ye Bile, but my friends may and that is the same thing as if I did. Adieu ! Is Mr Hook with you ? I wish I were, for a month at least ; for less I wd not come. Pray advise him not to be so modest. I hope he sees Mr. Lyttelton. I must expect your good offices with Mrs. Allen, so let her know I honour a good woman much but a good Wife more.

I am ever, yours faithfully,

A. Pope

Twitnam. *Nov* 2 (1738).

My other three Pope letters are unknown. They are addressed to Mr. Bethel on Tower Hill, London, Mr. Charles Ford in Park Place, and Mr. Jonathan Richardson, of Queen Square, London. The last-named was catalogued last year as written to *Samuel* Richardson. I gave £5 for it. Mr. Barker valued it at £8 in 1891. It provides an antidote to the unkind things Pope wrote about "Sulphureous" Bath on other occasions :—

BATH. *November* 14. 1742.

DE SIR,—The whole purpose of this is only to tell you that the length of my stay at this distance from you, has not made me unmindful of you ; and that I think you have regard enough for me to be pleased to hear, I have been, and am, better than usual. In about a fortnight or three weeks I hope to find you as little altered as possible at yr age, as when I left you, as I am at mine. God send you all Ease, philosophical and physical.

I am your sincerely-affectionate friend and servant,

A. POPE

My services to yr Son.

The letters of Horace Walpole, who generally wrote for posterity, are valuable,[1] but by no means as costly as those of Thomas Gray. Mr. Quaritch lately showed a group of holograph letters, illustrating the "quadruple alliance" of Gray, Walpole, West, and Ashton, which began at Eton. It included two fairly long letters of Gray and Walpole. I consider the collection very cheap at £55. Here is a characteristic unpublished note written by Horace Walpole to Hannah More, while the latter was staying with the Garricks in the Adelphi :—

[1] From £3 to £10.

Horace Walpole to Hannah More.

March 11.

I heard at Mrs. Ord's last night that you are not well. I wou'd fain flatter myself that you had only a pain in your apprehension of the coaches full of mob that were crowding the streets, but as I do not take for granted whatever will excuse me from caring, as people that are indifferent readily do, I beg to hear from yourself how you are. I do not mean from your own hand, but lips—send me an exact message, and if it is a good one it will give real pleasure to yours most sincerely,

H. WALPOLE.

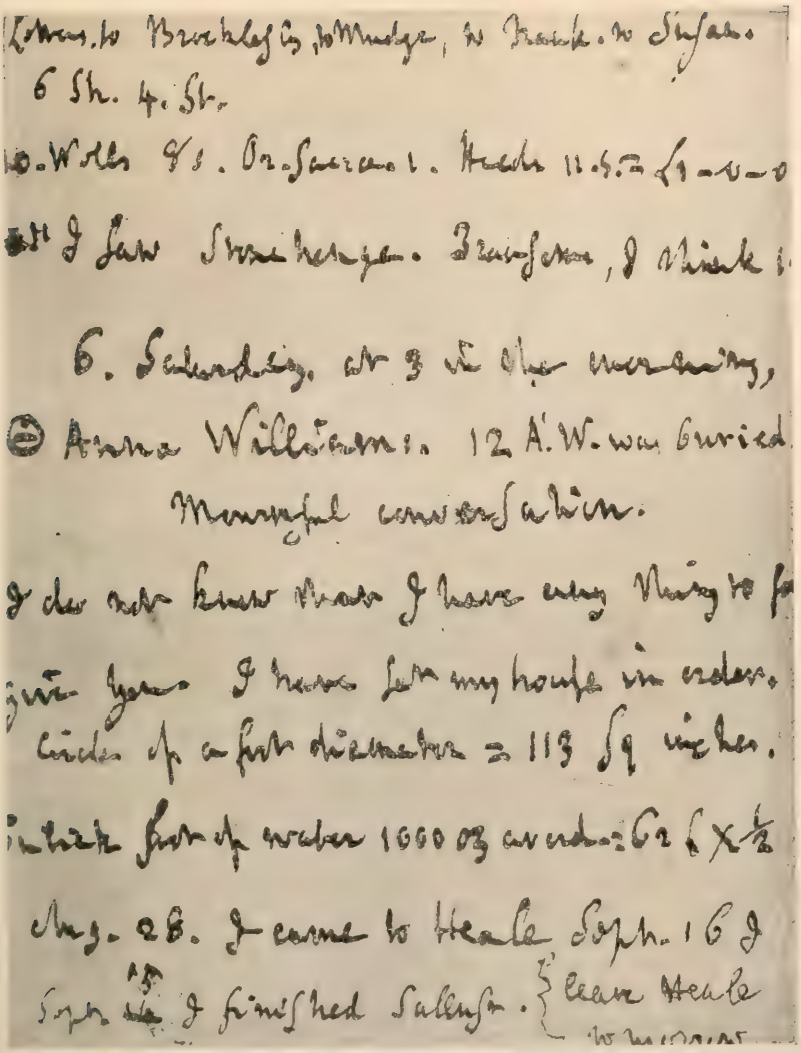
PS.—Mrs. Prospero, who is my Miranda, was there last night with a true blue embroidered favour, that cast a ten times more important colour on her accents and made her as potent in her own eyes as Sycorax.

To Miss More at the Adelphi.

The value of Johnson's letters has varied very little during the past quarter of a century, an A.L.S. of exceptional interest often bringing £40 or £50. Possibly his historic letters to Macpherson and Chesterfield or his ultimatum to Mrs. Thrale would now fetch considerably more. In the Haber Sale at New York a 2 pp. 4to A.L.S. dated April 13, 1779, to Cadell brought £17. I possess several Johnson letters, many of them unpublished and written during the last year of his life. The following A.L.S. to Mr. Ryland was seemingly unknown to Dr. Birkbeck Hill:—

To Mr. Ryland, Merchant in London.

DEAR SIR,—I have slackened in my diligence of correspondence, certainly not by ingratitude or less delight to hear from my friends, and as little would I have it imputed to idleness, or amusement of any other kind. The truth is that I care not much to think on my own state. I have for some time past grown worse, the water makes slow advances, and



PAGE OF DR. JOHNSON'S DIARY RECORDING HIS IMPRESSIONS OF STONEHENGE, ETC., 1783.

There was an old Mr. Lowndes dined with us, and got very drunk talking Politics with Will Burke & my Master after Dinner. Lord Verney & Edmund came home at Night very must flustered with Liquor, & I thought how I had spent three Months from home among Dunces of all Ranks and Sorts, but had never seen a Mandrunk till I came among the Wits. this was Accidental indeed, but what of that? it was so.

30. Septr. when I roze Mr. Thrale informd me that the Parliament was suddenly dissolved & that all the World was to bustle that we were to go to Southwark not to Streatham & canvass away. I heard the first part of this report with Pleasure, the latter with Pain; nothing but a real Misfortune could I think affect me so much as the thoughts of going to Town thus to settle for the Winter before I have had any Enjoyment of Streatham at all, & so all my hopes of Pleasure blow away. I thought to have lived at Streatham in Quiet & Comfort have kissed my Children & cuffed them by turns, & had a Place for them always to play in; & here I must be shut up in that odious Dungeon, where nobody will come near me, the Children are to be sick for want of Air, & I am never to see a face but Mr. Johnson's. Oh what a Life that is? and how truly do I abhor it.

at Noon however I saw my Girls, & thought Susan vastly improved at Evening I saw my Boys & liked them very well too. How much is there always to thank God for! but I dare not enjoy poor Streatham lest I should be forced to quit it.

THE TWO LAST PAGES OF THE MS. JOURNAL OF MRS. THRALE'S TOUR IN WALES, JULY SEPTEMBER, 1774, DESCRIBING THE DINNER AT BURKE'S.

my breath though not so much obstructed as in some former periods of my disorder is very short. I am not however heartless. The water has, since its first great effusion, invaded me thrice, and thrice has retreated. Accept my sincere thanks for your care in laying down the stone[1] w^h^ you and young Mr. Ryland have done. I doubt not of finding [it] well done, if ever I can make my mind firm enough to visit it. I am now contriving to return, and hope to be yet no disgrace to our monthly meeting[2] when I shall be with you, as my resolution is not very steady and as chance must have some part in the opportunity, I cannot tell. Do not omit to write, for your letters are a great part of my comfort.

I am,
Dear Sir
Your most humble servant
SAM JOHNSON

Pray write.

Lichfield, *Oct.* 30, 1784.

Six months before his death he writes thus to Mr. Nicoll on the subject of Cook's voyages :—

To Mr. Nicoll,
Bookseller,
In the Strand, London.

You were pleased to promise me that when the great Voyage should be published, you would send it to me. I am now at Pembroke College, Oxford, and if you can conveniently enclose it in a parcel, or send it any other way, I shall think the perusal of it a great favour.

I am,
Sir
Your most humble servant
SAM JOHNSON
June 8 1784

---

[1] Anna Williams's Memorial.

[2] Mr. Ryland was associated with Johnson in the formation of the last Club which owed its existence to Johnson's initiative and support.

Curiously enough, one of the last subjects upon which Johnson concentrated his waning energies in 1783–84 was that of the possibilities of the balloon, which he persistently called "ballon."[1]

For some years I have been an assiduous collector of the letters and MSS. of George Crabbe. I now possess his two historic letters to Edmund Burke. It was in the earliest of these (once the property of Sir Theodore Martin) that he made his despairing appeal for pecuniary aid to save him from suicide or starvation. Fifty-one years later, George Crabbe, Rector of Trowbridge, lay a-dying. He receives in his sick-chamber the following letter from John Forster :—

John Forster to George Crabbe.

[Letter franked by Edward Lytton Bulwer.]

4 Burton St.
Burton Crescent, London
Fany 20 '32

Revd. Sir,—I beg, very respectfully to submit to your inspection the enclosed paper.[2] May I venture to hope that your sympathy with the cause of the world of letters—independently of considerations unfortunately still more urgent, will induce you to lend the favour of your distinguished name to a project now become necessary to rescue Mr. Leigh Hunt from a hard crisis in his fortune

With the greatest respect,
I am, Sir,
Your very ob^dt^. servant
John Forster.

---

[1] See *Outlook*, March 5, 1910. Article on Johnson and balloons.

[2] Appeal for subscription for the relief of Leigh Hunt (1784–1859). It reached Trowbridge January 23rd. On February 3rd Crabbe died.

After Crabbe's death the following almost illegible draft of a reply was found amongst his papers :—

It w^d ill become me who have been so greatly [much] indebted to the kindness of my Friends, that [I should refuse to do what I could] disregard [not respond to] the application you are so good as to make on behalf of Mr. Leigh Hunt. My influence I fear is small [living] residing as, I do, where little except Cloth is made, little except Newspapers read. This is, however, not without exceptions. [It is] I consider it as doing myself Honour to join [however feebly] my [name with those endeavouring] attempt to serve [a distinguished member of] a man for whose welfare [those] such distinguished persons are interested [whose names are connected] to the [printed copy] paper [of the paper] printed [destined] for general Circulation

I am Sir ——

History had repeated itself, only the rôles were reversed. In 1832 the benefactor was Crabbe, and the distressed man of letters Hunt!

I have elected to speak of Burke amongst the writers, although he can claim a high place amongst the statesmen. His letters are always valuable, although the price fetched for two exceptionally fine specimens at the Haber Sale (New York, December 10, 1909) was disappointing. A long letter, written in his twentieth year, brought only £4 8s.; a splendid letter from Bath a short time before his death was sold for £6 8s. The following letter from Edmund Burke to Mrs. Montagu (one of many I have the good fortune to possess) has a distinct vein of American interest :—

WESTMINSTER,
MAY 4 1776, *Friday*.

DEAR MADAM,—I was in hopes, that I might have sent you, together with my acknowledgement for your kindness, the only

reward you desire for acts of friendship, an account of the full effect of them. Mrs. James's letter was undoubtedly what it ought to be on application from you. We have nothing to complain of Mrs. J. in point of civility but there is no further result of your indisposition. As yet indeed we do not despair. But to give the application its full effect on him, if in answer to Mrs. J. you keep the matter in some degree alive, I do not question but that it will succeed at last. Almost all the others are secure.

I cannot at all express how much obliged I am for the extremely friendly manner in which you take up my friends Mr. Burke's case. He is himself as sensible, as he is worthy of your goodness. It is something to be distinguished by the regards of those who regard but few. But to have a distinguished part in the mind where all have their places is much more flattering.

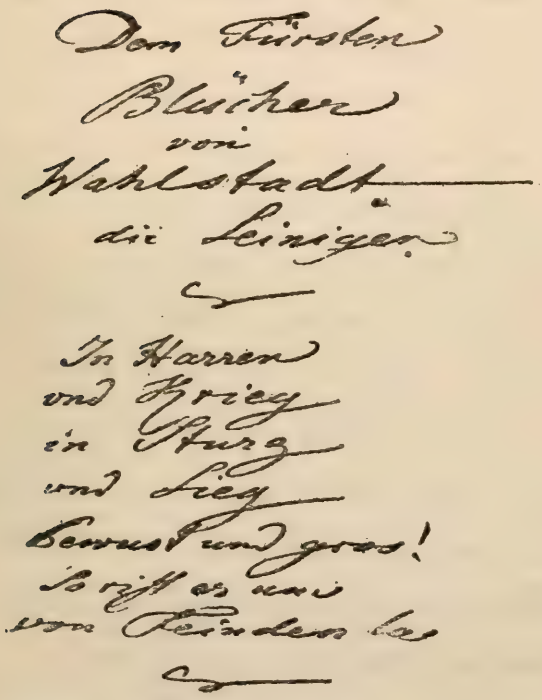
We have now almost finished our tedious Sessions ; and I hope to make you my acknowledgement when you return, somewhat more at leisure. The news from America is not very pleasing. Indeed I know of no News but that of Peace which can be so, to any well-disposed mind. General Howe has been driven from Boston, partly by scarcity, partly by a sharp Cannonade and Bombardment. He therefore made his disposition so well that they had not induced his return soon enough to give him any disturbance. He has collected everything with him and he has retired to the only place we have now on that extensive coast, Halifax, where, I doubt, for some little time at least he will not be much better commanded in point of provision though he will be practically out of reach of an enemy. Mrs. Burke joins me with all the rest of the family in faithful pledge to you, in the best compliments to yourself and to your most agreeable Miss Gregory.

I am, with the most sincere regard and highest esteem
Dear Madam,
Your sincere friend
and very obliged and humble servant,
EDM. BURKE.

Passing to the nineteenth century, which was to witness the eclipse of the art of letter-writing as well as the disappearance of the frank, we come to

the age of Keats, Shelley, Byron and Lamb. It was at the beginning of this eventful epoch that Goethe wrote the lines to Blücher, which form one of the shortest autographs I possess, but not the least curious or valuable :—

In Harren
und Krieg
in Sturz
und Sieg
bewust und gros
So riss er uns
Von Feinden los



HOLOGRAPH LINES BY GOETHE ON BLÜCHER, CIRCA 1812–13.

My friend, Mr. G. L. de St. M. Watson, gives me a forcible metrical translation:

> In warring or tarrying,
> In victory or woe,
> He towers; and through him
> We're freed from the foe.

My dear Reynolds,

I have been unmoving since you saw me: my nights are better which I think is a very encouraging thing You mention your cold as rather too obstinate a manner - if you do not outside have some flannel against the wind - which I hope will not keep on at this rate when you are in the Packet boat I should do ruin do. not stop upon such though the Passengers should vomit themselves inside out. Keep under Hatches from all sort of wet

I am pretty well provided with
Books at present, when you re-
him I may give you a com-
mission or two. Mr B C has
sent me not only his Sicilian Story
but yesterday his Dramatic Scenes
this is very polite and I shall do
what I can to make him sensible
I think so I confess they tease me
they are composed of amiability
the Seasons, the Leaves the Moon
&c. upon which he rings (accor-
ding to Hunt's expression) triple bob
majors Hommer that is nothing
I think he likes poetry for its own
sake, not his I hope I shall soon
be well enough to proceed
with my fancies and let you
about the notes on Sundays and
Stray days If I had been well
enough I should have liked to
cross the water with you Brown
wishes you a pleasant voyage -
Have fish for dinner at the sea
ports, and dont forget a bottle
of Claret You will not meet with
so much to hate at Brussels as
at Paris Remember me to all
my friends If I were well enough
I would paraphrase an ode of
Horace's for you on your embar-
king in the seventy years ago
style the Packet will bear a
comparison with a roman galley
at any rate

Ever yours affectionately
J. Keats

A.L.S. OF JOHN KEATS (THREE PAGES) TO J. H. REYNOLDS,
FEBRUARY 28, 1820.

Goethe was an enthusiastic collector of MSS. as well as a poet. Of the autograph cult he wrote :—

As I personally possess a considerable collection of autographs and often take occasion to examine and reflect upon them, it seems to me that every one who directs his thoughts to this subject may succeed in taking several steps in the right direction, which may lead to his own improvement and satisfaction, if not to the instruction of others.

The value of Keats, Shelley, Byron and Scott letters I have already spoken of. In the Haber Sale a Keats letter brought £500! Letters of Charles Lamb range from £4 to £10 or more in price. I purchased the following note to Hone for £2 2s. and believe I secured a bargain :—

To Mr. Hone.

45 LUDGATE HILL

DEAR SIR,—I was not very well or in spirits when your pleasing note reached me or should have noticed sooner. Our Hebrew Brethren seem to appreciate the good news of this life in more liberal latitude than we to judge from frequent graces. One I think you must have omitted "After concluding a bargain." Their distinction of "fruits growing upon trees" and "upon the ground" I can understand. A sow makes quite a different grunt *her grace* from eating chestnuts and pignuts. The last is a little above Ela with this and wishing grace be with you,

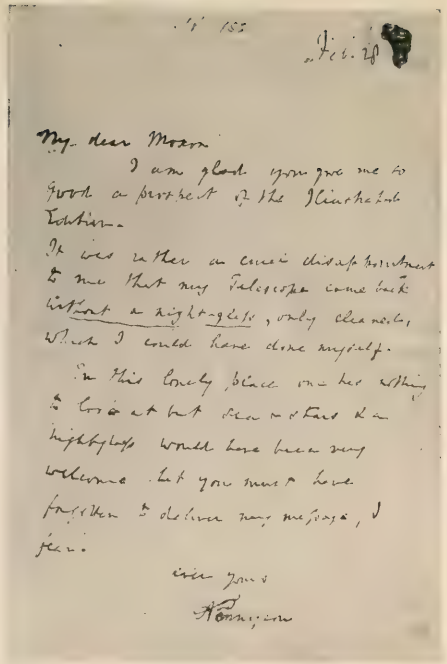
Yours

C. LAMB

9 *Nov.* 1821.

Of the literary autograph letters and MSS. of the Victorian era the highest prices are obtained for those of Alfred Tennyson and George Meredith. In a catalogue lately issued by Messrs. Sotheran [1] the

[1] 37, Piccadilly, W.



My dear Moxon

I am glad you give me so good a prospect of the Illustrated Edition.

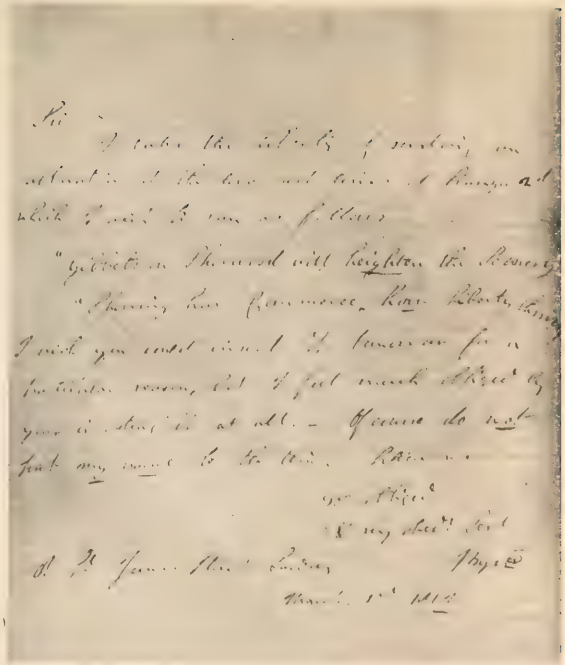
It was rather a cruel disappointment to me that my Telescope came back without a nightglass, only cleaned, which I could have done myself.

In this lonely place one has nothing to look at but sea & stars & a nightglass would have been very welcome but you must have forgotten to deliver my message, I fear.

ever yours

Tennyson

LETTER OF LORD TENNYSON TO MR. MOXON.



Sir

I take the liberty of sending an advertisement of the two next terms of Rangoon and which I wish to run as follows

"Gibbets on Sherwood will heighten the Scenery

"Sharing her Commerce, Kiss Liberty thrives

I wish you could insert it tomorrow for a particular reason, but I feel much obliged by your inserting it at all. — Of course do not put my name to the thing. Rather

Yrs obliged

& my obedt Servt

Byron

St. Jas. Street Sunday

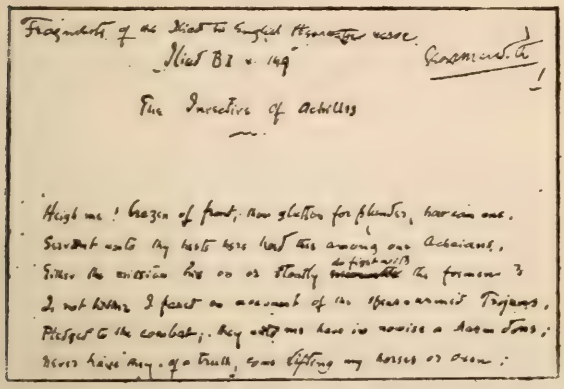
March 1st 1812

A.L.S. OF LORD BYRON TO MR. PERRY, MARCH 1, 1812.

ILLUSTRATED LETTER OF W. M. THACKERAY FROM GLASGOW.

(In the collection of Mr. Frank Sabin.)

author's copy of Tennyson's "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington," with thirty lines of MS. additions and a large number of alterations and corrections, is priced at £120. The MS. draft of his famous dedication to Queen Victoria published in 1853, and consisting of eight four-line verses, is considered a little more valuable. An ordinary 8vo letter of one page frequently fetches as much as £2



LINES FROM THE "ILIAD." SPECIMEN OF THE MS. OF THE LATE MR. GEORGE MEREDITH.

(By kind permission of Mr. Clement K. Shorter.)

or £3. George Meredith's MSS. have been lately sold for several hundred pounds, and an ordinary letter would be cheap at anything between £2 and £3. Through the kindness of my friend Mr. Clement Shorter I am able to give a specimen of Meredith's handwriting.

W. M. Thackeray and Charles Dickens were both voluminous letter-writers. The letters of the former now command higher prices than those of any Vic-

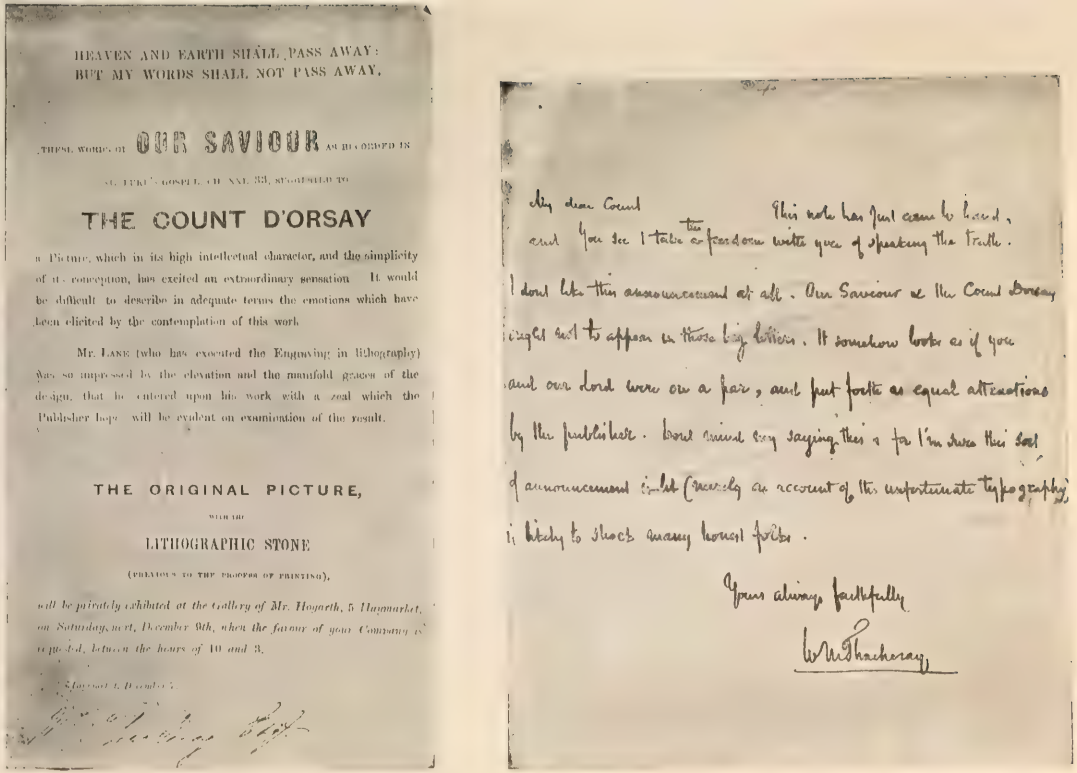
torian writer. He also frequently illustrated his witty notes with amusing sketches in pen and ink and other oddities. One of these (from the splendid collection of Mr. Sabin) forms one of the illustrations of this volume. Into another he introduces a typical Scotch "sandwich-man" carrying on his back the advertisement of the Thackeray Lectures at Merchants' Hall, Glasgow. From my own collection I give a very interesting example of Thackeray's wit, in the shape of a letter addressed to Count d'Orsay, on the subject of the proposed publication of a sacred picture by the famous dandy. On the back of the circular announcing its appearance he wrote :—

My dear Count,—This note has just come to hand, and you see I take the freedom with you of speaking the truth. I dont like this announcement at all. Our Saviour and the Count d'Orsay ought not to appear in those big letters. It somehow looks as if you and our Lord were on a par, and put forth as equal attractions by the publisher. Dont mind my saying this, for I'm sure this sort of announcement (merely on account of the unfortunate typography) is likely to shock many honest folks.

Yours always faithfully
W M Thackeray.

In the earlier part of his career, Thackeray wrote a running hand very different to the upright calligraphy of his later life.

Early Dickens letters of any length are eagerly sought for, and sell for nearly three times as much as those written between 1850 and his death. I am able to give illustrations of some exceptionally early Thackeray and Dickens letters, which came into the possession of Mr. George Gregory, of Bath, through whose hands the Autograph Album of the first



HEAVEN AND EARTH SHALL PASS AWAY:
BUT MY WORDS SHALL NOT PASS AWAY.

THESE WORDS OF **OUR SAVIOUR** AS RECORDED IN

ST. LUKE'S GOSPEL, CH. XXI. 33, SUGGESTED TO

THE COUNT D'ORSAY

a Picture, which in its high intellectual character, and the simplicity of its conception, has excited an extraordinary sensation. It would be difficult to describe in adequate terms the emotions which have been elicited by the contemplation of this work.

Mr. LANE (who has executed the Engraving in lithography) was so impressed by the elevation and the manifold graces of the design, that he entered upon his work with a zeal which the Publisher hopes will be evident on examination of the result.

THE ORIGINAL PICTURE,

WITH THE

LITHOGRAPHIC STONE

(PREVIOUS TO THE PROCESS OF PRINTING),

will be privately exhibited at the Gallery of Mr. Hogarth, 5 Haymarket, on Saturday next, December 9th, when the favour of your Company is requested, between the hours of 10 and 3.

Haymarket, December 7.

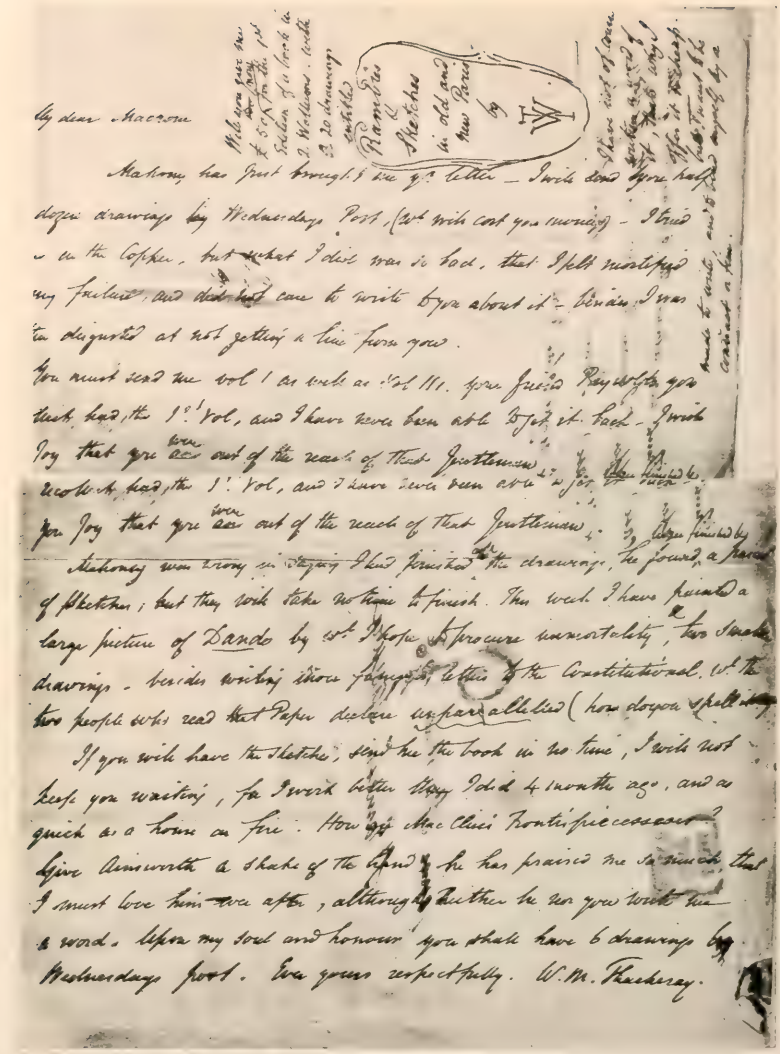
My dear Count This note has just come to hand, and you see I take the freedom with you of speaking the truth.

I dont like this announcement at all. Our Saviour & the Count Dorsay ought not to appear in those big letters. It somehow looks as if you and our Lord were on a par, and put forth as equal attractions by the publisher. Dont mind my saying this & for I'm sure this sort of announcement is let (merely as account of the unfortunate typography) is likely to shock many honest folks.

Yours always faithfully

W M Thackeray

A.L.S. OF W. M. THACKERAY TO COUNT D'ORSAY ON FLY-LEAF OF CIRCULAR ANNOUNCING THE PUBLICATION OF A PICTURE, N.D.



EARLY A.L.S. OF W. M. THACKERAY TO MR. MACRONE, PUBLISHER, DISCOVERED BY MR. GEORGE GREGORY, OF BATH.

(First style of handwriting in 1836.)

Mrs. Sheridan recently passed. The earliest Dickens letter, of the fifteen autographs in my collection, was written when he was in his twenty-ninth year. It is interesting as containing a frank exposition of his political creed :—

Charles Dickens at Broadstairs to Frederick Dickens, Commissariat, Treasury, Whitehall.

Sunday September Twelfth 1841.

My dear Fred,—The wording of the Minute is certainly discouraging. If I saw any way of helping you by coming up to town, I would do so, immediately. But I cannot possibly apply to the Tories for *anything*. I daresay they would be glad enough if I would, but I cannot with any regard to honor, consistency, or truth, ask any favour of people whom politically, I despise and abhor. It would tie my hands, seal my lips, rob my pen of its honesty, and bind me neck and heels in discreditable fetters.

Is Archer in Town? If so, have you spoken to him? If not, when is he coming? You should speak to him certainly. I have told you before, that I am much afraid you have not treated him with that show of respect, which he has a right to claim. Why in the name of God should he have a personal dislike to you, but for some such reason as this?

If you think, and I see no objection to your asking Mr. Archer the question, that without doing anything improper, you might memorialise the Treasury, I will draw a memorial for you. If you have reason to think this would be unofficial and ill-advised, I know of nothing better than waiting and hoping.

I should be as sorry as you, if you were to lose this step. Let me hear from you by return

Affectionately always
C. D.

The touching letter recording his feelings at the death of his little daughter is, I think, a human document of more than ordinary interest :—

Charles Dickens to Thomas Mitton.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE
Nineteenth April 1851

MY DEAR MITTON,—I have been in trouble, or I should have written to you sooner. My wife has been, and is, far from well. Frederick caused me much vexation and expense. My poor father's death caused me much distress—and more expense—but of that, in such a case I say nothing. I came to London last Monday to preside at a public dinner—played with little Dora my youngest child before I went—and was told, when I left the chair, that she had died in a moment. I am quite myself again, but I have undergone a great deal.

I send you all the papers I have relating to Thompson's affair. I am in town again now and shall be at home on Monday, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday mornings. I am not going back to Malvern, but have let this house until September, and taken the Fort at Broadstairs.

Y^rs faithfully
C. D.

Here is one of the last letters he ever wrote, to which I have already alluded as a rare specimen of a valuable autograph written in duplicate:—

Charles Dickens to J. B. Buckstone.

GAD'S HILL PLACE,
HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT
SUNDAY *Fifteenth May* 1870.
5 HYDE PARK PLACE W.

MY DEAR BUCKSTONE,—I send a duplicate of this note to your private address at Sydenham in case it should miss you at the Haymarket.

For a few years past, I have been liable, at wholly uncertain and incalculable times, to a severe attack of Neuralgia in the foot, about once in the course of the year. It began in an injury to the finer muscles or nerves, occasioned by over-walking in deep snow. When it comes

Gad's Hill Place,
Higham by Rochester, Kent.

Sunday Fifteenth May 1870

5 Hyde Park Place W.

My Dear Buckstone

I send a duplicate of this note to your private address at Sydenham, in case it should miss you at the Haymarket.

For a few years past, I have been liable at wholly uncertain and incalculable times, to a severe attack of Neuralgia in the foot, about once in the course of a year. It began in an injury to the finer muscles or nerves, occasioned by over-walking in deep snow — when it comes on, I cannot stand, and can bear no covering whatever on the sensitive place. One of these seizures is upon me now. Until it leaves me, I could no more walk into St James's Hall than I could fly in.

I hope you will present my duty to the Princess, and assure His Royal Highness that nothing short of my being

FIRST PAGE OF ONE OF CHARLES DICKENS'S LAST LETTERS, MAY 15, 1870.

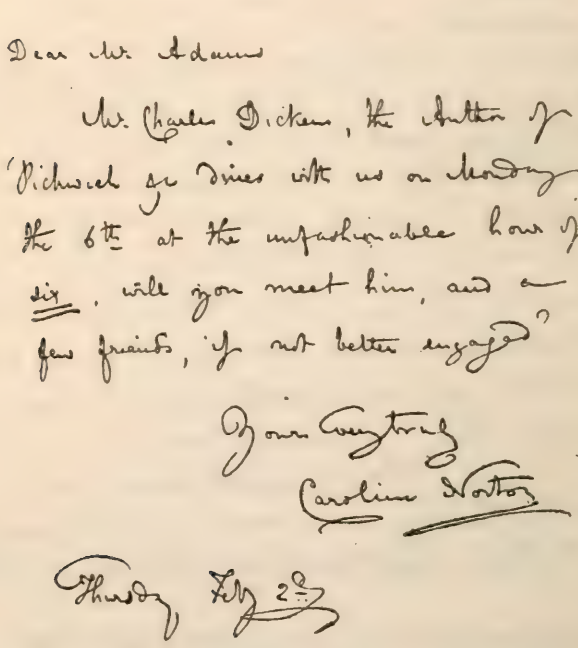
on, I cannot stand and can bear no covering whatever on the sensitive place. One of these seizures is upon me now. Until it leaves me I could no more walk into St. James's Hall than I could fly in.

I hope you will present my duty to the Prince, and assure His Royal Highness that nothing short of my being (most unfortunately) disabled for the moment, would have prevented my attending as a Trustee of the Fund, at the dinner, and warmly express my poor sense of the great and inestimable service his Royal Highness renders to a most deserving Institution by so very kindly commending it to the public.

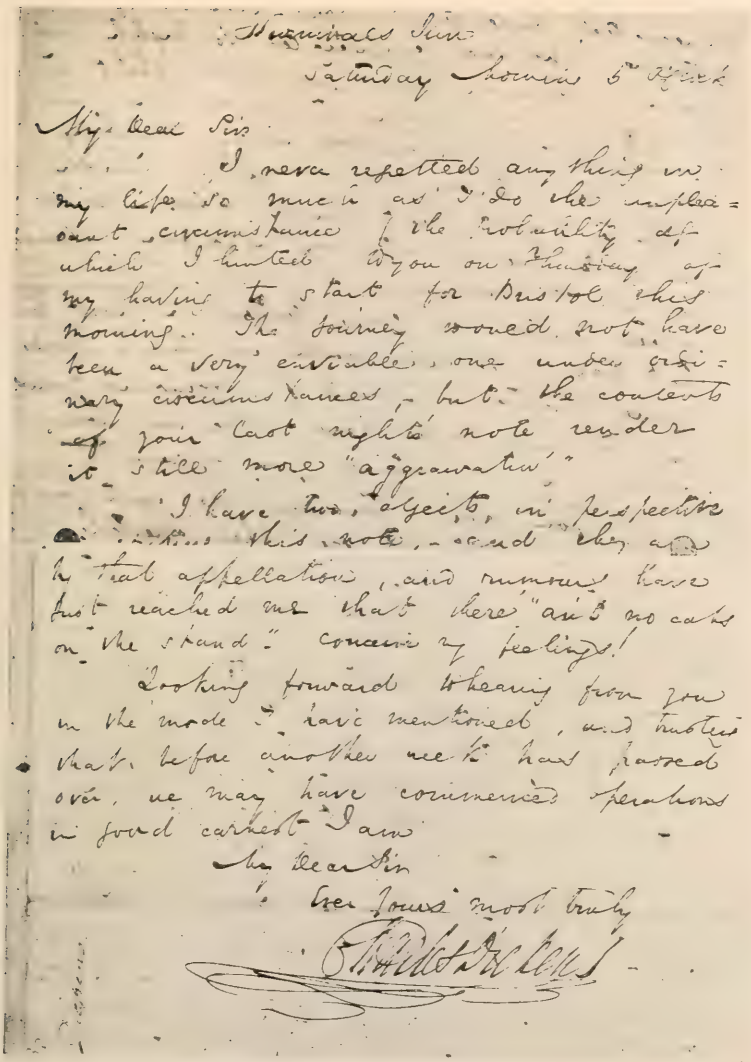
Faithfully your's always

CHARLES DICKENS

J. B. BUCKSTONE EQR



A.L.S. OF HONOURABLE MRS. NORTON CONTAINING AN INVITATION TO MEET CHARLES DICKENS, THE AUTHOR OF "PICKWICK," AT DINNER.



Furnivals Inn
Saturday Morning 5th March

My dear Sir

I never repetted any thing in my life so much as I do the unpleasant circumstance of the probability of which I hinted to you on Thursday of my having to start for Bristol this morning. The journey would not have been a very enviable one under ordinary circumstances - but the contents of your last night's note render it still more "aggravating"

I have two objects in perspective at this note, - and they are by that appellation, and rumour have just reached me that there "ain't no cakes on the stand" concerning my feelings!

Looking forward to hearing from you in the mode last mentioned, and trusting that before another week has passed over, we may have commenced operations in good earnest I am

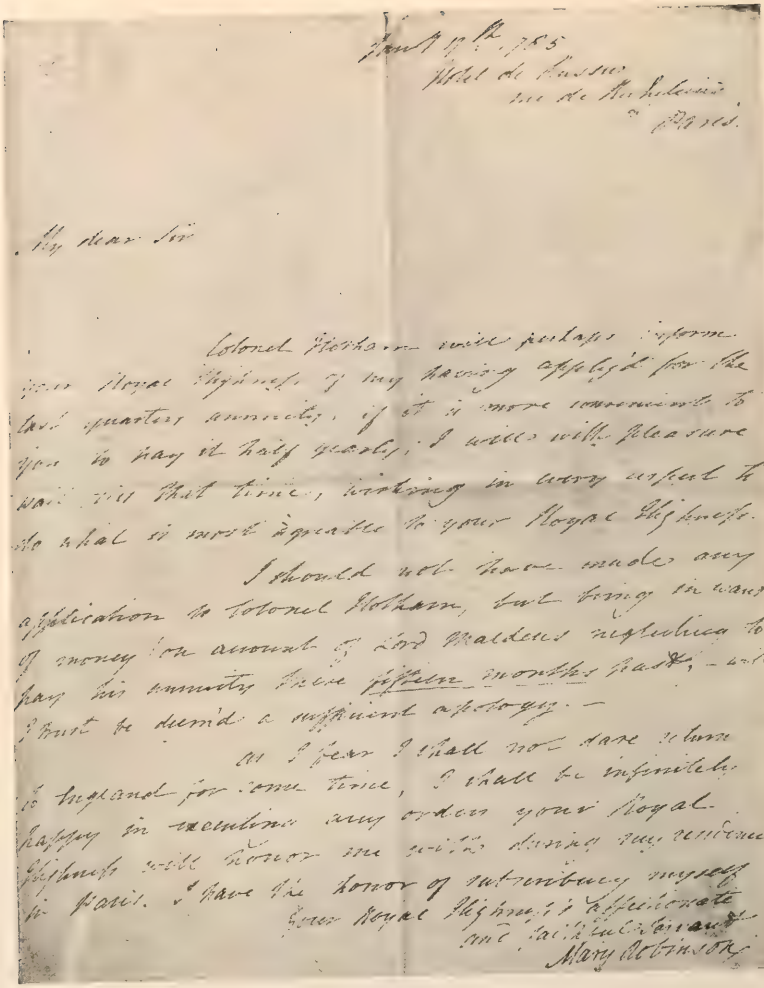
My dear Sir

Ever Yours most truly

Chas Dickens

EARLY LETTER OF CHARLES DICKENS TO MR. MACRONE (1836) FROM FURNIVAL'S INN.

(Now in the collection of Mr. Peter Keary.)



A.L.S. OF "PERDITA" (MARY ROBINSON) TO GEORGE, PRINCE OF WALES, JANUARY 19, 1785.

Carlyle's letters vary in price from £2 2s. to £5 5s. or more. The following note explains how the specimen of his calligraphy I reproduce was obtained for an autograph hunter by his nephew in 1877:—

NEWLANDS COTTAGE
7th December 1877

My DEAR SIR,—I was much pleased to have your's of the 4th inst. I enclose card of admission to the Install[n] at Edinburgh which I cribbed from the Gov[r's] Sunday coat long after its date, and which to tell the truth I did not intend to part with; but I think it so thoroughly what your friend would like that I have resolved to send it.

All Uncle Tom's late letters *to his relatives* are written on scraps of paper that might be at hand when he finished work for the day and signed 'T. C.' only—all full signatures in letters in my possession have long ago been clipped off. . . .

Always faithfully your's
JAMES CARLYLE.

The letters of Whistler have quadrupled in value since his death. I possess several of them, but only give as an illustration of his handwriting a post-card from Lyme Regis bearing by way of signature the once familiar butterfly. "Mark Twain" was also a very amusing letter-writer. The following postscript is characteristic of his humour:—

Since penning the foregoing the "Atlantic" has come to hand with that most thoroughly and entirely satisfactory notice of "Roughing it," and I am as uplifted and reassured by it as a mother who has given birth to a white baby when she was awfully afraid it was going to be a mulatto. I have been afraid and shaky all along, but now unless the N. of "Tribune" gives the book a black eye, I am all right.

With many thanks TWAIN

Admit Mr James Carlyle to the Rector's Installation Address

at Edinr. April 2d.

T. Carlyle

(Chelsea, 23 March 1866)

HOLOGRAPH ORDER OF ADMISSION OF THOMAS CARLYLE TO HIS RECTORIAL ADDRESS AT EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY, DATED MARCH 23, 1866.

George Augustus Sala and Edmund Yates were friends and contemporaries of Charles Dickens, and survived him. They are both entitled to a place amongst the last of the Victorian letter-writers. The minute handwriting of Sala was even more distinct than that of Thackeray. Here is a typical Sala letter:—

HOTEL DE FLANDRE, MONTAGNE DE LA COUR, BRUSSELS,
Thursday November Twenty Seventh 1884.

DEAR LADY WOLSELEY,—My wife who during my absence is my Postmistress General, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Secretary of State for Home and Foreign Affairs and Chief Commissioner of Works all rolled into one, has forwarded me your note, and has scribbled on the margin "with two lovely photographs." I hasten to thank you for the graceful and thoughtful kindness which has prompted your welcome gift. I am proud to believe that you *know* how much I admire and esteem your illustrious husband; how eagerly I have followed the course of his splendid and well-deserved fortunes, and how highly I value the friendship with which during so many years he has honoured me. It is really to me a pleasure to have grown old when I remember that amongst my most prized relics at home are a visiting card inscribed "*Major* Wolseley, for Mr. Sala, St. Lawrence Hall, Montreal 1863"; the walking stick which *Sir Garnet* Wolseley brought me home from South Africa; the letter which *Lord* Wolseley wrote me from the Kremlin, Moscow on Coronation Day 1883, to which I am now able to add "two lovely photographs" and your kind note. Were I going alone on my long and arduous journey, my abiding hope would be, of course, to come home safe and sound to my wife. Happily we are not to be separated (although the friendly but cynical solicitor, who made my will just before I left town was good enough to remark *you must add a codicil in case you are both drowned*); so we shall both, during our wanderings be able to nourish the pleasant hope that we shall be permitted on our return to pay our homage to the *Earl* and *Countess* Wolseley. I have, dear Madam, in my time, prophesied a great deal more in print about your Lord than you are aware of, and I am

Whitby
June 14. 1788

My Dear Brother

Yours of May 24 overtook me here this morning. But I have not received the parcel, wch you say was sent by the Coach. And very probably I shall not receive it, unless it pleases God to bring me back to London. My Health is wonderfully continued. Only I am in the fashion: I have a little of the Rheumatism.

The case of that Old Woman was very remarkable. Tis a true saying, "Nonesse rich, while they are Out of Hell. One would be sorry for the Death of George Jarvis; only that we know, God does all things well. If Mr Holmes has any money of mine in his hands, I desire he wd give you a Guinea for the widow. Peace be with you & yours! I am

Yr Affectionate Brother

J Wesley

A.L.S. OF JOHN WESLEY, JUNE 14, 1788.

confident that my latest prediction will come true—*and more than true.* Meanwhile, I am,

Your Ladyship's faithful and obliged servant

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA

Some hundreds of Edmund Yates's letters are in my possession, and I have utilised them to extra-illustrate his "Recollections" which I have extended to seventeen volumes. In the last edition of his entertaining book he alludes to the pleasure a letter from Mr. Charles Kent, the friend of Dickens, gave him in "troublous times." More than twenty years after I gladly gave 5s. for the original in the auction room :—

To Charles Kent Esq

1 Campden Grove, Kensington, W

Ah! my dear old friend, how good and thoughtful of you and what a perfectly acceptable gift!

'though fallen on evil days
on evil days though fallen and evil tongues'
(vide to-day's *Times*)

I am receiving such evidences of love and sympathy from my friends, and such kindness from officials here, that I am fairly broken down by them.

God bless you

HOLLOWAY, *Jany* 17 '85 EDMUND YATES

VIII

NAVAL AND MILITARY AUTOGRAPHS

CHAPTER VIII

Naval and military autographs

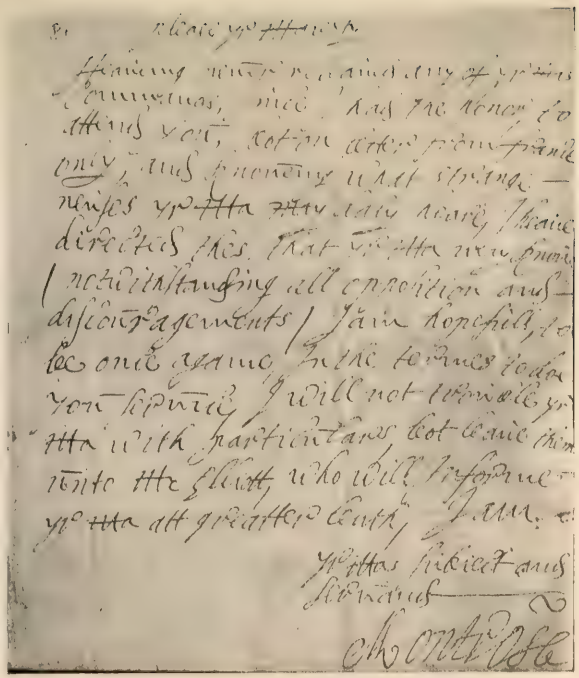
Good ink, like good wine, is none the worse for age.
SAMUEL JOHNSON.

THERE are some autograph collectors who limit their sphere of operations to the writings of great sailors and soldiers. The subject has already been touched on incidentally under the head of Royal Autographs, for James II. and William IV. were for a time Lord High Admirals of England, while other sovereigns met the enemy on the field of battle.[1] If Wellington can claim distinction as our greatest soldier, he ranks also amongst our most prolific letter-writers. The same may be said of Nelson with almost equal truth. Of Wellington's innumerable letters, a great many are supposed to have been written by his Secretary, Colonel Gurwood, and Nelson's amanuensis is also said to have successfully imitated the handwriting of his chief. There are numerous facsimiles of the letters of both Nelson and Wellington,[1] and the axiom *caveat emptor* cannot be too frequently remembered when a suspicious specimen is offered for sale. In 1827 we are informed that "English Generals and Admirals

[1] See *ante*, p. 126.

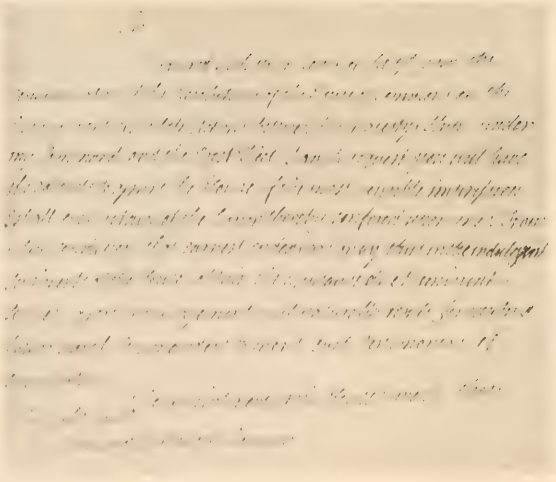
vary greatly in value," and they do still. We are told, moreover, that at this epoch "the Royalist Prince Rupert is worth £1 9s., while the Parliamentary General, Fairfax, with four Peers for his supporters, is worth only 10s. The naval hero, Lord Nelson, commands £2 15s., while four other gallant admirals sink to 7s. 3d. each. Washington ranks with Cromwell at £5 15s. 6d., and leaves all other competitors behind." To-day a letter of Thomas Fairfax would bring anything from £7 to £20 or more, and a good D.S. at least £4 or £5. His autographs are always much in request. Washington letters have realised as much as £100 and more, and so have Cromwell's.

In 1876–77–78 Mr. Waller was selling letters of Hood and Rodney at prices varying from 4s. 6d. to 7s. and "Wellingtons" at an average of 5s., but asked 12s. 6d. for a good letter of Villeneuve, who was defeated and taken prisoner at Trafalgar. In the same catalogue I find an A.L.S. of Wellington for 3s. 6d., and "fine specimens" of Turenne Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough (Commander-in-Chief of the Forces in Spain *temp.* Queen Anne), priced respectively at £2 10s. Five years ago, however, a short letter written by the Iron Duke on the evening after Waterloo realised £105 at Sotheby's, and, as I have already stated, Wellington paid £60 for two similar letters during his lifetime—and committed them to the flames. At this time I see three interesting letters of Marlborough and three of his wife, with one document signed by the latter, were sold in a lot for £10 10s. Very good letters of Marlborough may even now be bought in Germany and Belgium for £3 or £4. In the "eighteen-seventies" very little Nelson MS. seems to have been in the market, but

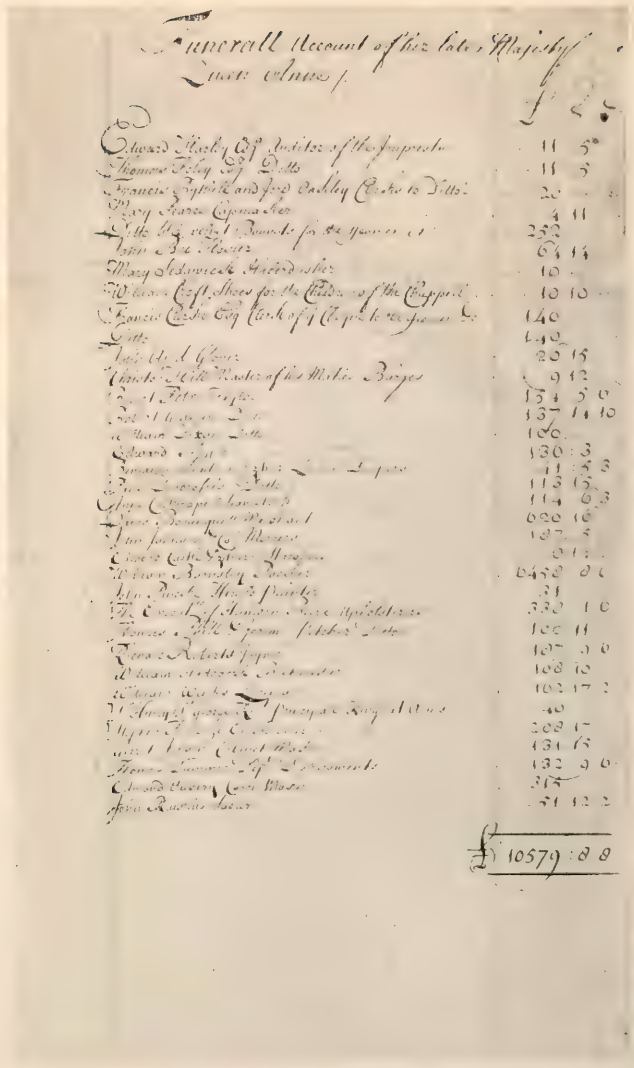


A.L.S. OF DUKE OF MONTROSE TO THE KING.

(In the collection of Mr. F. Sabin.)



PART OF A.L.S. OF EARL HOWE TO EARL SPENCER AFTER HIS GREAT VICTORY OF JUNE 1, 1794.



OFFICIAL MS. ACCOUNT OF EXPENSES INCURRED AT FUNERAL OF QUEEN ANNE.

Mr. Frederick Barker offered a long A.L.S. of Lady Nelson (May 2, 1805) for 6s., and "directions for approaching Cadiz, 1 p. folio, wholly in Nelson's handwriting," for £3 5s. He priced two good A.L.S. of 1794 and 1795 at £5 5s. and £4 4s. In 1887 I met with a letter of General Gordon, quoted as "very rare," for £2 2s. In the same catalogue is a fine letter of Prince Rupert for £3 3s. I frankly envy the purchaser for 9s. 6d. of a letter written by Marshal Ney, from Montreuil, Boulogne, in 1804, when the terror of French invasion was at its height.

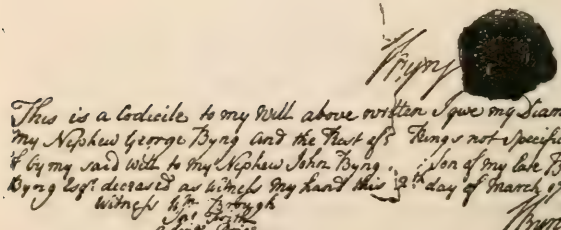
At the present moment there is little demand for the letters of the less known sailors and soldiers of the latter part of the seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth centuries, like Shovel, Wager, and Rooke, and I have seen a letter of Vernon, whose coat of grogram gave rise to the familiar word which still denotes the dilution of spirits with water, sold for 5s.! There is, however, one naval autograph of this period which now commands high prices. I allude to letters and other MSS. of the ill-fated John Byng, judicially murdered on March 14, 1757, "*pour encourager les autres*," as Voltaire says in "Candide," or in other words, to save the face of an inefficient and discredited Ministry. I gave £3 in 1907 for an A.L.S. of his which thirty years ago was sold by Mr. Waller for 12s. 6d., but I regard as a veritable autographic treasure the original of his will, which bears his signature in three places, and was executed only forty-eight hours before his tragic death. The *sang-froid* displayed in its elaboration shows the courage and deliberation of the unlucky admiral when face to face with the "Grim Sergeant."

Only twelve months divide the death of Byng from the birth of Nelson, whose autographs are even

Sir

I have Received the favour of yours, and am very sorry to find you have been out of order, I hope you are upon the mending hand, I am very much obliged to you for the thoughts you have had for our little Ship, I do assure you Sr Jacob it is my opinion, that no Ship can do better In all Respects, than She does at present, but however, I will get the Masts forward, as

ONE PAGE OF A.L.S. OF GENERAL BYNG, OCTOBER 27, 1727.



SIGNATURE OF ADMIRAL BYNG ON HIS WILL A FEW DAYS BEFORE HIS DEATH, MARCH, 1757.

more costly than those of the Elizabethan heroes of 1588. They now hold, as I shall presently show, the record as regards both price and interest. I have already alluded to the perils and pitfalls of Nelson forgeries. The collector must, of course, bear in mind the striking differences in the calligraphy of the great Admiral before and after the loss of his right arm in July, 1797. The earliest example I possess of Nelson's handwriting is a commission, signed on April 5, 1781, by him as well as by Lord Lisbourne, Bamber Gascoyne, and J. Greville. Nelson was then twenty-three. He was thirty-nine when he penned with his *right hand* the following historic letter to Earl Spencer :—

Lord Nelson to Earl Spencer.

THESEUS, *May* 28 1797.

MY LORD,—On my arrival from the Mediterranean two days past I received from Sir John Jervis your Lordship's Letter of April 3 together with a Gold Medal which the King has been pleased to order to be struck in Commemoration of the Victory obtained by His Fleet on the fourteenth of February last and which His Majesty has been graciously pleased to direct me the honor of wearing.

May I presume to say that when I observe the Medal that it must be a strong inducement for the continuance of my exertion for His Majesty and for my Country and my Country's Service and it shall be my pride to preserve it unsullied to posterity.

Your Lordship having from the moment of your coming to the Admiralty represented my services in the most favourable point of view to the King, allow me once more to return you my thanks together with those for the very handsome and flattering manner in which your Lordship have executed the King's Commands.

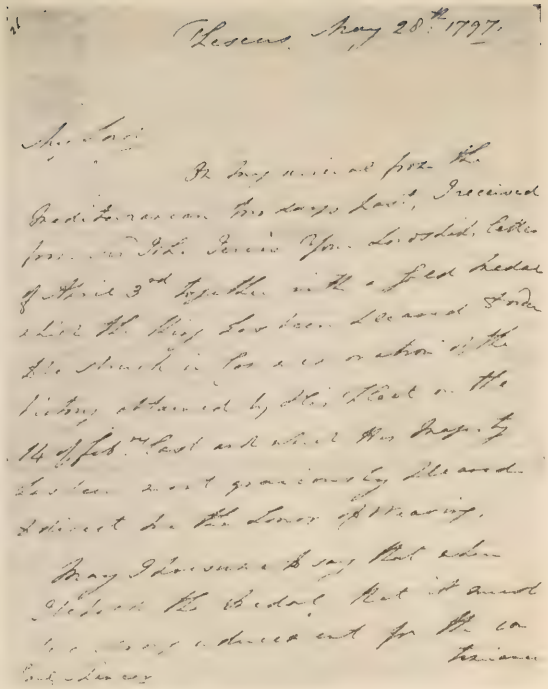
I have the Honor to be my Lord,
Your most obedient servant,
HORATIO NELSON.

Two months later occurred the accident which deprived Nelson of his right hand. The Bath facsimile [1] is a good specimen of his writing with his left hand in the last years of the eighteenth century. In reading any life of Nelson one cannot help being struck with the tenderness of the letters he addressed to his wife up to their abrupt separation. At the end of 1799, while he was still in the Mediterranean, she wrote him the following letter, now in my collection:—

St James's St
Dec 10 1797

My dear Husband,—I have seen a letter from Lady Berry to Mr. Davison. She tells him of Sir Edward's letter, dated Foudroyant, Minorca, Octr 18th, and mentions you were quite well which I hope is true. I dined a few days back at Mr Nepean's. He told me you were at Gibralter (*sic*). I thanked him for his intelligence. Would have given something to have asked a question, but that could not be done—therefore I still flatter myself as you are half way we may stand some chance of seeing you. Captn Foley has this instant left me. From what Captn Hood said I was in great hopes Captn F had very lately seen you. He is full of the Earl's commanding the Channel Fleet. Lord Bridport has sailed again. Our good father received yesterday [a letter] from your B^r. William teazing him about no dignitaries (*sic*) for the Nelson family. I must write to the Rector and beg him not to be so tiresome, for truly I am nursing and doing everything I can to make your father comfortable and then he is quite upset by one of these epistles Mr W. N. [William Nesbit] requested me to give Mr Windham a *gentle hint*. Sir Peter and Lady Parker called yesterday. We have agreed to go and see the famous French milliner. Lady P declares they will put me in a sack and send me to Bonaparte. Her spirits are good indeed. She sends Sir Peter to the Admiralty to hear when you are expected home. I don't know what she is *not* to do —Dance and grow young. We dined yesterday (Susanna I mean) with the Hamiltons. I wish I could say Mrs Hamilton is the least modernized of all the antique figures. She

[1] *Vide* Chapter III., p. 78.



Theseus May 28th 1797.

My Lord

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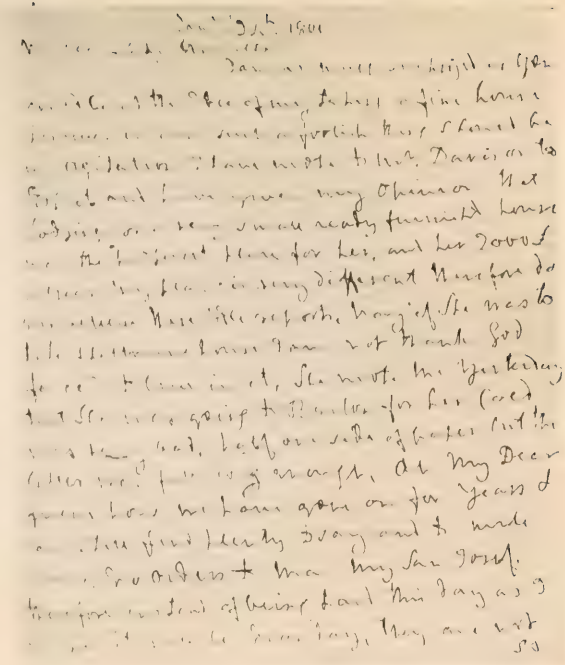
May I presume to say that when I behold the Medal that it must be a strong inducement for the continuance

Earl Spencer

A.L.S. OF LORD NELSON TO EARL SPENCER, WRITTEN WITH HIS RIGHT HAND, *THESEUS*, MAY 28, 1798.

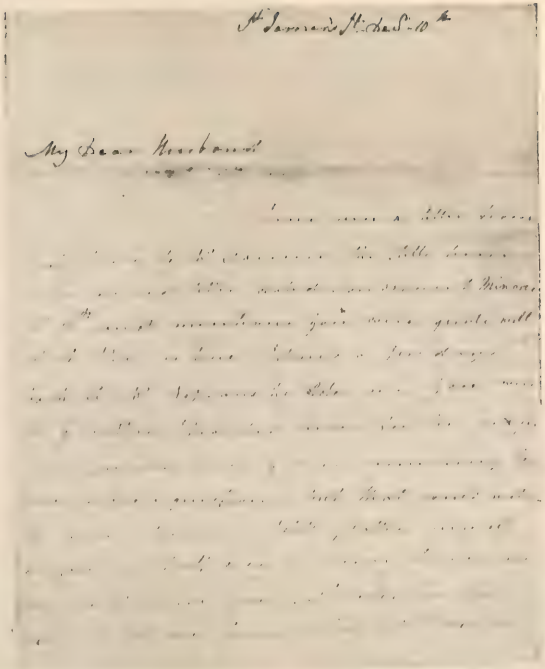


Jan.y 24th 1801

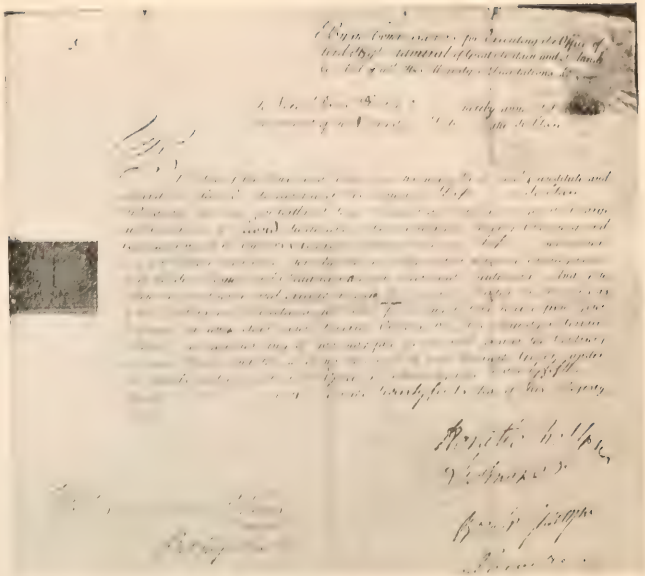
[illegible]

[illegible] as Your [illegible] the Idea of my taking a fine house [illegible] such a foolish thing should be [illegible] Agitation I have wrote to Mr. Davison to [illegible] and have given my Opinion that lodging [illegible] small ready furnished house [illegible] the [illegible] place for her, and her 2000 [illegible] very different therefore do [illegible] Mr. [illegible] reports, Many of She was to [illegible] house I am not thank God [illegible] in it, She wrote me yesterday [illegible] going to Barlow for her Card [illegible] half one side of paper but the [illegible] enough, At My Dear [illegible] we have gone on for years & [illegible] find plenty to say and to write [illegible] Orders to Ma My Son Josef. [illegible] of being [illegible] this day as I [illegible] Monday, they are not so

A.L.S. OF NELSON TO LADY HAMILTON ABOUT HIS WIFE, WRITTEN WITH HIS LEFT HAND, JANUARY 24, 1801.



FIRST PAGE OF A.L.S. OF LADY NELSON TO HER HUSBAND, DECEMBER 10, 1799.



NAVAL COMMISSION SIGNED BY LORD NELSON, APRIL 25, 1781.

certainly (is) the most. Mr Morton pais (*sic*) great attention. Bob Jones tells me Forbes has got Mr M to sign some papers for him. I long to hear what you have done for Captain Hardy. *His* character is excellent indeed.

Our father has received direction how to proceed in sending to the stage coach for Horace Susanna Bolton is to go to buy Maps in St Paul's Churchyard to amuse his children. Our good father's love to you and Blessing. God Bless and Protect my Dearest Husband

Believe me your affec. Wife
FRANCES H NELSON

The tone of Lady Nelson's letter to her husband presents a striking contrast to that in which, little more than a year later, he speaks of her in a letter to Lady Hamilton, for which I paid a very large sum early in 1905. As might be expected, the demand for Nelson autographs became more urgent as the centenary of Trafalgar approached, but, on the whole, the rise of price was not quite as marked as might be expected, although one particular letter to Lady Hamilton, apparently little more striking than the one now given, was sold for £1,050. The great Nelson sensation (as far as the autograph market is concerned) came off some five months later, viz., on March 14, 1906, when the unique Nelson document described as follows was disposed of at Christie's:—

NELSON'S FAMOUS MEMORANDUM TO THE FLEET ON THE EVE OF TRAFALGAR.

133. NELSON (ADMIRAL LORD) "GENERAL MEMORANDUM," IN THE AUTOGRAPH OF THE FAMOUS ADMIRAL, IN WHICH HE FORESHADOWED THE PLAN OF ATTACK AT TRAFALGAR, AND WHICH HE ACTUALLY CARRIED OUT. "VICTORY," OFF CADIZ, 9 OCT. 1805, 8 pp. 4to.

Thinking it almost impossible to bring a fleet of 40 sail of the line into a line of Battle, in variable winds, thick weather,

and other circumstances which must occur, without such a loss of time, that the opportunity would probably be lost. . . . I have therefore made up my mind to keep the fleet in that position of sailing (with the exception of the first and second in command) that the order of sailing is to be the order of battle ; placing the fleet in two lines of 16 ships each, with an advanced squadron of eight of the fastest sailing two-decked ships [which] will always make if wanted a line of 24 sail, on whichever line the Commander-in-Chief may direct, etc.

It was bought by Mr. Frank Sabin for £3,600. A newspaper controversy at once arose on the subject of the transaction. Public attention was forcibly directed to the supreme importance of the document, and an effort was made to secure it for the nation, Mr. Sabin most generously offering to sell it to the authorities at cost price. The movement to acquire it fell through, owing to the impossibility of obtaining a grant-in-aid. Quite unexpectedly the late Mr. B. M. Woollan offered to buy it for the nation, but stipulated that during his life-time the MS. " should remain in his possession and be accessible to the public in the Town Hall at Tunbridge Wells." This was agreed to, Mr. Sabin maintaining his proposal to sell at cost price. The Trafalgar order was framed in oak taken from the *Victory* under the direction of a British Museum expert, and after remaining for some time at Tunbridge Wells, has found (since Mr. Woollan's death) a final resting-place in the National Collection. On March 14, 1906, Messrs. Maggs paid £170 for one of the official copies of the " General Memorandum," viz., that addressed to William Lechmere, Captain of the *Thunderer*. It filled 5 pp. It was marked " secret," and contained a note to the effect that " the Captain should return the Secret Memorandum to

the *Victory* when the *Thunderer* quits the fleet for England." The original has been, or will shortly be, facsimiled by the British Museum MS. Department. Collectors will then be able to procure copies of it at an almost nominal price. During the weeks which followed March 14, 1906, the "Memorandum" became the subject of a dozen romantic legends. Several years ago I purchased the signature of Nelson appended to the last few lines of another of these "official copies" for one sovereign. It was formally attested by the widow of the Captain to whom it was originally sent. I possess a 3 pp. A.L.S. written by Lord Nelson to Lord Collingwood on board H.M.S. *Victory*, on October 10, 1805—eleven days before Trafalgar. It cost £20. Some time since, the album of the Honourable Charles Greville, the first lover of Emma Hart (Lady Hamilton) was broken up. Amongst the documents I purchased from it was a MS. account of Nelson's household expenses while residing in Bond Street, with Mr. Greville, from April 7 to 18, 1803.

The letters of "Nelson's Hardy"[1] fetch from £1 to £2 each. They lack style, but are characterised by the breezy heartiness which was typical of the man whom Nelson loved and trusted. The discovery of many hundreds of Hardy's letters to his Dorset relatives in 1905 enabled me, writing in collaboration with my friend the Rev. R. G. Bartelot, to supply to some extent a long-felt want in naval history. Here are two Hardy letters which came to light subsequent to our examination of the great mass of his correspondence :—

[1] See further "The Three Dorset Captains" and "Nelson's Hardy," by A. M. Broadley and R. G. Bartelot (London : John Murray, 1906 and 1909).

Captain T. M. Hardy, at Plymouth, to his brother-in-law, Mr. Manfield, at Dorchester.

SAN JOSEF—TORBAY.
Feby 8 1801

DEAR MANFIELD,—We are in Hourly expectation of the St George, where the Admiral is to hoist his flag. The moment she arrives myself and all the officers go with him. We shall sail as soon as possible for Portsmouth, and from thence to the North Sea. After we have done *the business* there, which we expect to do in about two months, the Flag is again to be hoisted in San Josef. The Squadron under Sir Henry Harvey arrived the day before yesterday and sailed the same evening to detach a squadron after the ships that left Brest about a fortnight ago. Lawrence arrived yesterday with Roberts. He is a fine lad and will do, but he is very young. Admiral [Lord Nelson] tells me he saw you. You landed and of course you made your *grand salam* to him. I suppose a number of *wonderful* stories has been told of San Josef in and about Dorchester. Our Beer is reduced to six bottles and on a moderate calculation that cannot last more than three days. Therefore you will add to the many obligations I am under to you if you will order our friend Oakley to send as soon as possible six or eight dozen more directed to Lord Nelson, St George, Spithead, by any vessel that sails from Weymouth. With duty to all friends, I remain, dear Manfield

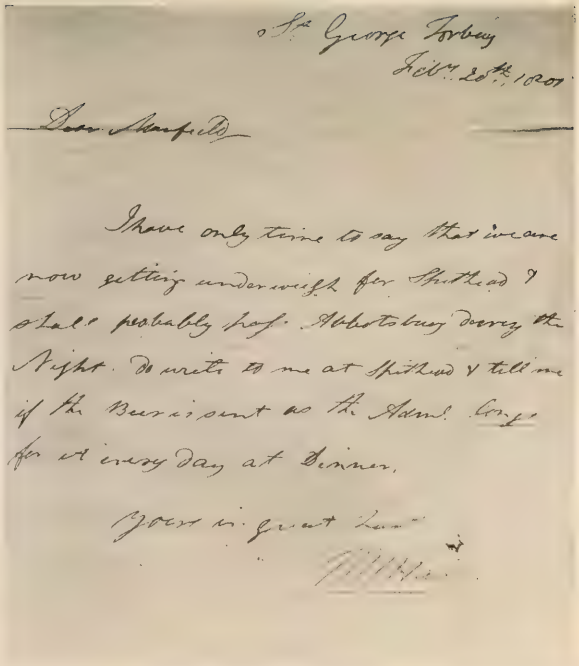
Your's sincerely
T. M. HARDY

Captain T. M. Hardy, Torbay, to Mr Manfield, Dorchester.

DEAR MANFIELD,—I have only time to say that we are now getting under weigh for Spithead, and shall probably pass Abbotsbury Ferry during the night. Do write to me at Spithead and tell me if the Beer is sent as the Ad^{ml} *longs* for it every day at Dinner

Your's in great haste
T. M. HARDY

Letters of Rodney and Howe now fetch from £1



St. George Torbay
Feby. 20th. 1801

Dear Marfield

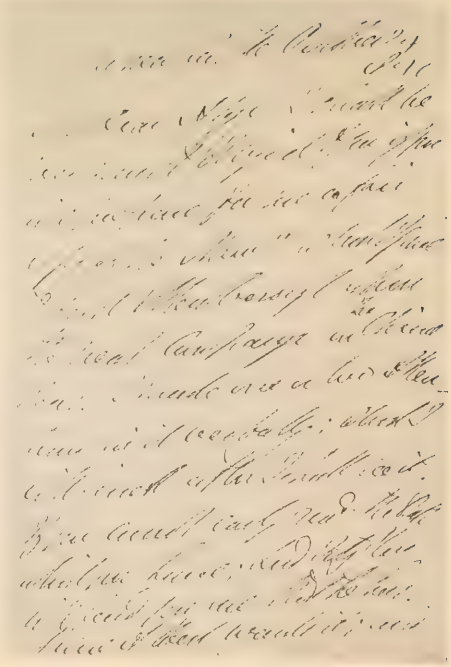
I have only time to say that we are now getting underweigh for Spithead & shall probably pass Abbotsbury during the Night. Do write to me at Spithead & tell me if the Beer is sent as the Adml. Longs for it every day at Dinner.

Yours in great hast

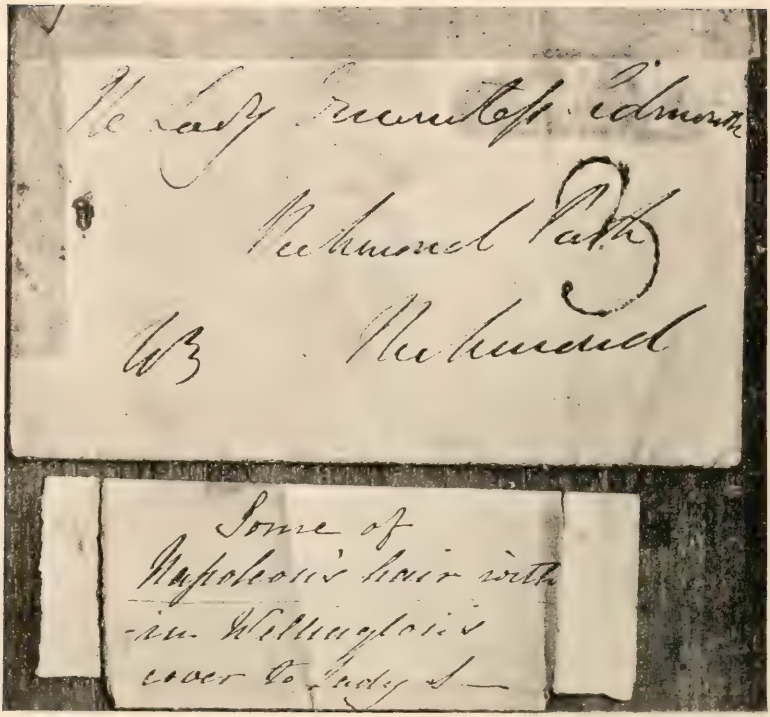
[illegible]

A.L.S. OF SIR THOMAS HARDY ABOUT LORD NELSON'S BEER, TORBAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1801.

[illegible]



LETTER OF DUKE OF WELLINGTON TO MR. ALGERNON GREVILLE, OCTOBER 24, 1841, SPEAKING OF THE NECESSITY OF HIS BEING PRESENT AT THE BIRTH OF KING EDWARD VII.



ENVELOPE DIRECTED BY DUKE OF WELLINGTON TO LADY SIDMOUTH ENCLOSING LOCK OF NAPOLEON'S HAIR, 1821.

to £2 each; those of St. Vincent, Collingwood, and the Hoods somewhat less.

Letters of most of the Nelson captains can still be bought at very moderate prices, but if addressed to Nelson the value would be at once doubled.

The finest collection of letters by Fairfax and other soldiers of the Civil War, both Royalist and Parliamentarian, I know of, is in the possession of Mr. F. Sabin, by whose permission I reproduce the letter of Montrose to the King, which is priced at £60 :—

Superscription, "for the King's Maiesty," and endorsement, "LORD OF MONTROSE, 3d February."

PLEASE YR MAIESTY

Haveing never receaved any of yr Mas Commands, since I had the honor to attend you, bot on letter from france only, and knoweing what strange newses yr Ma may daly heare, I heave directed thes that your Ma may know (notwithstanding all opposition and encouragements) I am hopefull, to be once againe in the termes to doe your service I will not trouble yr Ma with particulars bot leave them unto Mr Elliott, who will informe yr Ma att greatter lenth I am

Yr Mas Subject and Servant

MONTROSE

I have already alluded to the varying prices of Wellington's letters, which depend entirely on the time at which they were written. If dated June 17, 18, 19 or 20, 1815, they might be worth anything from £50 upwards; letters from the Peninsula on military topics bring from £2 to £5, but I only gave 30s. for the note and envelope franked and addressed to Lady Sidmouth, covering a lock of Napoleon's hair—the latter being included in the price! In my opinion there could not possibly be a

more interesting souvenir of the victor of Waterloo. The letters of Sir Hudson Lowe are sold from £1 to £3, those of Marshal Blücher fetching about the same price.

Few of the letters of living warriors fetch high prices. The amusing and satirical letters of Frederick Burnaby are worth from 4s. to 10s., but I refrain from publishing those in my collection. Letters of Earl Roberts and Viscount Wolseley average from 3s. to 5s., but Lord Kitchener writes little and declines persistently to be "drawn." I once saw a letter of his priced at £2 12s. 6d., but that was when the Boer War was at its height.

IX

AUTOGRAPHS OF MUSIC, THE DRAMA, AND ART

CHAPTER IX

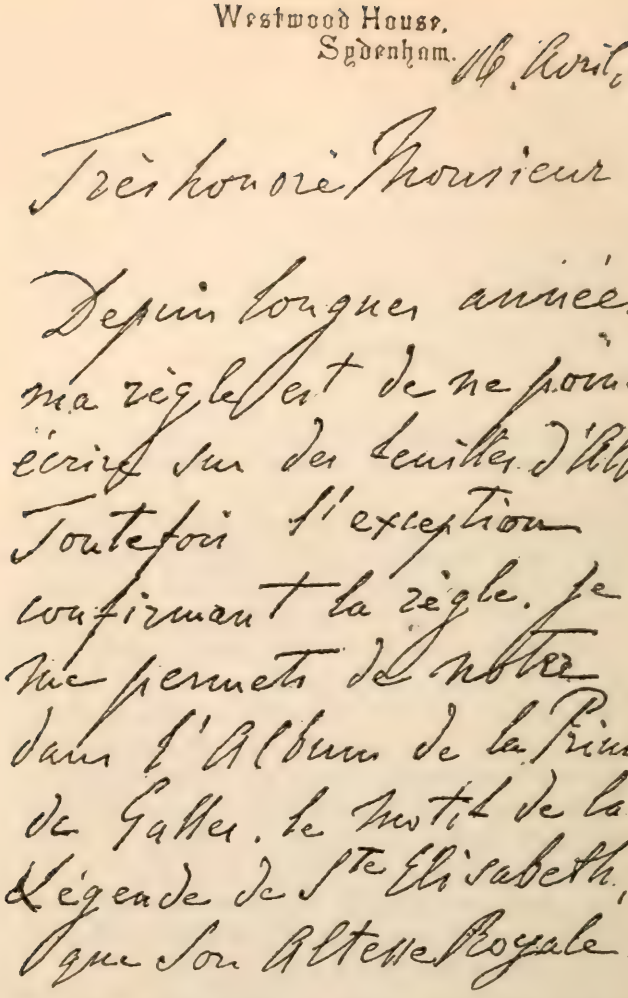
AUTOGRAPHS OF MUSIC, THE DRAMA, AND ART

Illustrated letters

> We pry
> In the dark archives and tenacious scrolls
> Of written thought.—HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

ON December 17, 1907, four-and-twenty letters of Ludwig van Beethoven were sold at Sotheby's for £660, notwithstanding the fact that the autographs of musicians, artists, and actors, are not even mentioned by the chronicler of prices in 1827! For the solitary letter of Beethoven in my collection I paid M. Noël Charavay £10, and it was at the same outlay I acquired in England an interesting letter of Joseph Haydn's. In extra-illustrating the "History of the Festivals of the Three Choirs," of which my ancestor, William Hayes, Mus. Doc. (1707–1777), was one of the founders and subsequently a conductor, I acquired considerable experience in the market prices of all sorts of musical MSS.

In this particular class of autographs "album specimens" have often considerable value, for musicians have always been the target of the autograph-hunter, especially so of those of the fair


Westwood House,
Sydenham. 16. Avril, 86

Très honoré Monsieur

Depuis longues années
ma règle est de ne point
écrire sur des feuilles d'Album.
Toutefois l'exception
confirmant la règle, je
me permets de noter
dans l'Album de la Princesse
de Galles, le motif de la
Légende de Ste Elisabeth,
que Son Altesse Royale.

A.L.S. OF THE ABBÉ LISZT TO SECRETARY OF PRINCESS OF WALES (QUEEN ALEXANDRA), APRIL 16, 1886.

sex.[1] It is no uncommon sight after a "star" concert to see the tired-out central attraction in a state of autograph siege, either for inscriptions in albums or signatures to photographs. The plaintive autograph letter of Franz Liszt tells the tale of the request made on behalf of the owner of a Royal Album to the exigencies of which he gracefully surrendered. A few bars of music written and signed by Handel would now be worth quite £20 or £25; and some day the musical autographs of Edward Elgar will fetch very high prices. William and Philip Hayes rank in the first class of English composers of Church music, although the father was overshadowed by his loyal friendship for Handel, and the latter by his admiration for Haydn. I have acquired (with one or two trifling exceptions) the MSS. of their compositions, several of which have never been published. Like most musicians, the Hayeses were humourists. They wrote anthems and chants, but they won fame in their generation by catches, canons, glees, madrigals, and fugitive pieces of all sorts. The tuneful airs of Philip Hayes [1738–1797] re-echoed amidst the glades of Blenheim, and were often heard at Ranelagh, Vauxhall, and "Marybone."[2] Musical autographs have risen considerably in price during the past thirty years, as shown at the comparatively recent Taphouse Sale. A very fine letter of Chopin's was offered for sale at 250 francs last

[1] A fan covered with the drawings, signatures, and handwriting of modern artists and musicians was sold at Sotheby's on May 4, 1910, for £101.

[2] A great deal of interesting information on this head will be found in Dr. Mee's "History of the Oldest Music Room in Europe," which will shortly be published by Mr. John Lane.

Wien den 5ten Jenner 803.

Liebster Elsler!

Seye so gütig, mir bey allererster gelegenheit die alte Sinfonie (: genannt die zerstreute :) herauf zu schicken, indem Ihro Majestät die Kayserin den alten schmarn zu hören ein verlangen trägt. ich ersuche demnach dem Hr. Meßner mir dieselbe auf etwelche Tage zu leihen, ich werde daran nichts verletzen. übrigens wird es mich freuen, wenn du, und all die übrige Herren sich wohl befinden; an alle alle besonders meinen Bruder, Luigi, Fux, und seine Helfte etc: mein Dupl:

Jos: Haydn

A.L.S. OF JOSEPH HAYDN, THE COMPOSER, JUNE 5, 1803.

year by Madame Veuve Gabriel Charavay. Letters of Mendelssohn and Wagner are in great request. The former vary in price from £3 to £10. Although Richard Wagner was a prolific letter-writer, any letter of his is worth £5 or thereabouts, and many have sold at from £20 to £50. I have never seen an A.L.S. of Handel's in the sale-rooms. A good one will probably fetch £50. A fragment of one of his compositions, once in the possession of William Hayes, lately realised £100. Much of his music seems to have been written out by Smart.

In 1876 Mr. Waller offered a letter of Beethoven's for sale at £3 10s.; one by Dr. Blow for £1 and 2 pp. of one of William Boyce's compositions for 7s. 6d.! The latter would certainly fetch 40s. to-day, but thirty years ago autographs of Catalani, Bishop, Cooke, Holmes, Hummel, Michael Kelly, Lablache, Loder, Meyerbeer, Offenbach, Louisa Pyne, Rossini, Rudersdorff, Tamburini, and Samuel Wesley averaged about 3s.! I lately gave £3 3s. for the signed MS. of Wesley's "Ode on the Death of Boyce," the bicentenary of whose birth occurs this year (1910), in which also the centenary of the birth of Wesley's musical son, Samuel Sebastian Wesley, might appropriately be celebrated at Gloucester. Amongst Mr. Frank Sabin's autographic *rariora* is the MS. of the original score of Thomas Moore's "Last Rose of Summer." There is a great demand in America just now for Moore MSS. of this sort, although ordinary letters rarely fetch high prices. Charles Burney's letters (of which I have many) are to my mind always interesting, although they only bring from 15s. to 30s. in the sale-rooms.

For some collectors the Drama offers a peculiar fascination. I have already described the letter of

William Wilson of the "Fortune" Theatre, with whom Shakespeare possibly played.[1] The great dramatist himself, from the autograph point of view, has been alluded to. In turning over the catalogues of 1876–86 one is struck with the high prices of letters of David Garrick and Sarah Siddons. Garrick rarely wrote a dull letter. When Paul Sandby asked for a box he replied—

> I will maintain Good Master Sandby
> And with my blood, the Fact will stand by,
> The trifle ask'd is no great favour,
> And you and your's are wellcome ever
> D Garrick

Here are some examples of Garrick's letters to Mrs. Montagu not generally known :—

Mr. Garrick to Mrs. Montagu.

Drury Lane Theatre.

Dear Madam,—I take up ye first piece of paper to answer your note. I feel for you and for poor amiable Miss Gregory from my heart of hearts ! These exquisite feelings are too often tortured not to wish them changed for the less sensible dispositions and were mortal matters balanc'd and calmly considered it would be a question whether Mrs. Montagu is more to be envied than a late female cousin of mine who being told of a favourite Brother's death said she foresaw it long ago for he would not leave drinking Punch and then she bespoke her mourning. I shall take care that you have your refusal of a box next Friday if I am able to perform. If you should be engaged pray let it revert to me. I must desire you not to say a word to anybody of my intentions. . . .

Mrs. Garrick and I shall do ourselves the honour of attending you on Sunday.

Most faithful ever and ever Yours,
D. Garrick.

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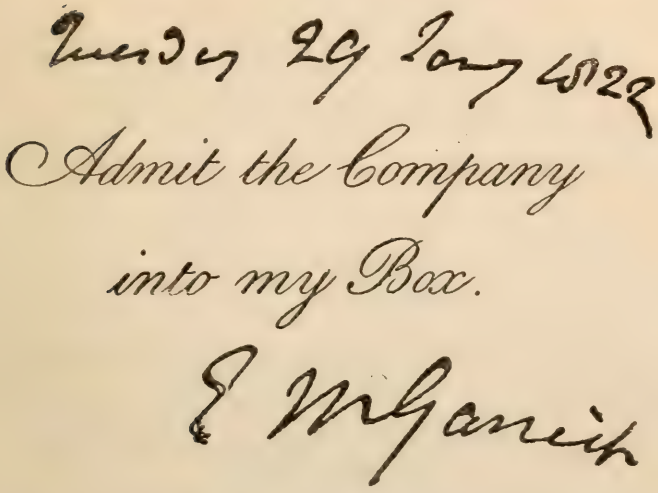
[1] See *ante*, Chapter IV., p. 109, and Chapter VII., p. 196.

David Garrick to Mrs. Montagu.

MY DEAR MADAM,—We are unfortunately engaged on Sunday next but if we are able to quit our Company, may we be permitted to pay our respects to you? If you should be engaged we will wait upon you ye first opportunity. I have made bold to answer for you a subscription to Mr. Capel's School of Shakespeare. I will tell you more of this when I have the honour and pleasure of seeing you.

I am most devotedly yours,

D. GARRICK.

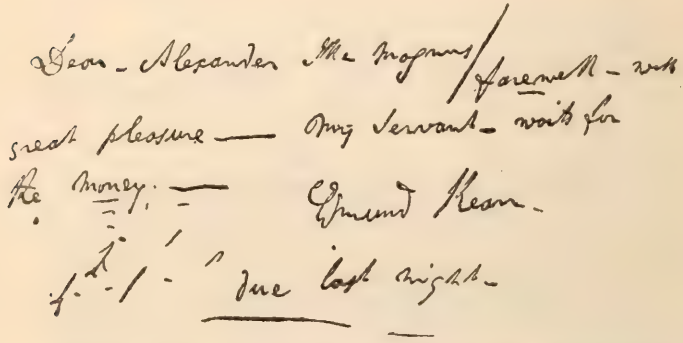


SIGNATURE OF THE NONAGENARIAN MRS. GARRICK A FEW DAYS BEFORE HER DEATH.

I have in my collection a Drury Lane box-ticket dated and signed by Mrs. Garrick a few days before her death. In the last decade of the nineteenth century the late Mr. Thomas Knox Holmes told me he had danced with Mrs. Garrick in her drawing-room at the Adelphi when she was past ninety. She was actually engaged in inspecting her dress for the

theatre when Death once more "eclipsed the gaiety" of the brilliant little côterie in which Garrick's widow moved.

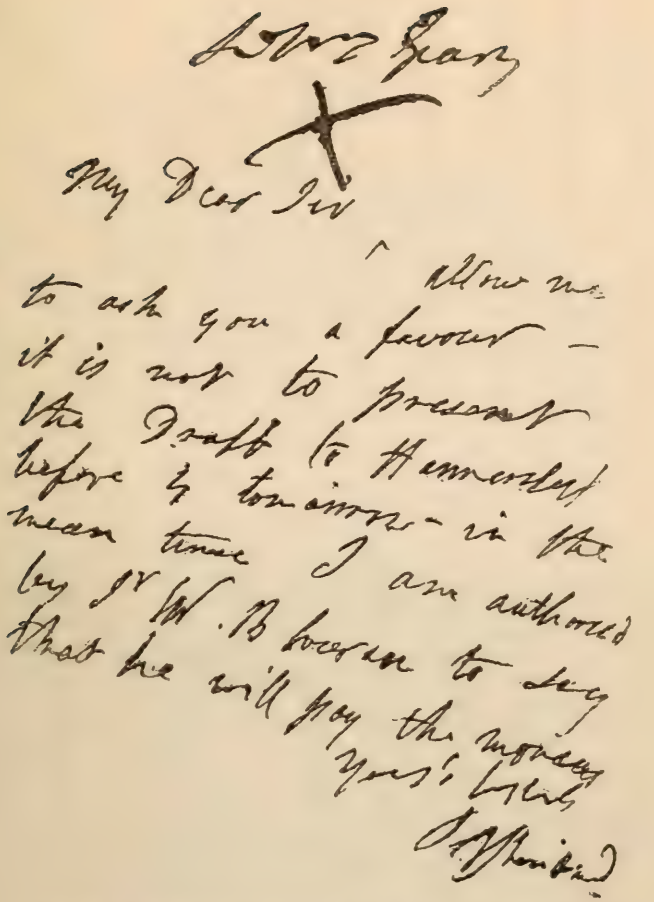
The letters of Sarah Siddons fetched quite as much or even more in the "eighteen-seventies" than they do now. As a matter of fact, the charming letter to Mrs. Piozzi, now reproduced, exchanged hands in 1876 at £2 2s. more than I gave for it in 1910.



A GENUINE SHORT NOTE SIGNED BY EDMUND KEAN, AFTERWARDS IMITATED.

Mrs. Siddons to Mrs. Piozzi, Westbourne Farm, Paddington, January 29, 1809.

My dear Friend,—I am merely anxious to know how you and Mr. Piozzi are, and the distance between me and your fair daughters, are now so great that I get no accounts of you. You know of old, my distaste of writing, and I know full well my inability of amusing you, so that my letter has nothing to recommend it, except the true love of the writer, which knows no change. Often, very often, do I think of you, and most sincerely do I lament your suffering, but there is nowhere but heaven I believe that is exempt from affliction; but dear Soul let me hear from you. You have heard of the fire in which I lost every stage ornament so many years collecting, and at so great expense of time and money. All my Jewels, all my



A.L.S. OF R. B. SHERIDAN ASKING FOR TIME TO PAY A DRAFT.

Ey 2-4 Ivy Cottage
October 12.

My dear Sir.

I am very anxious that my Son should be a Member of the Garrick Club. It is not for me to give a Certificate of his Qualifications. but I flatter myself they are numerous: and known to at least one third of the Members. The Chairman of next Saturday is one of the persons who has made me more proud of my Son than I was before he could boast the honor of his acquaintance & patronage. He is sure of his vote, and I may say - friendship. This you will allow is no small recommendation. Your own vote and interest in his favor is earnestly solicited by

Dear Sir
Yours truly
C Mathews.

Illustrious Esqr

A.L.S. OF CHARLES MATHEWS, THE ACTOR, PROPOSING HIS SON FOR ELECTION TO GARRICK CLUB, N.D.

lace, and in short nothing left. The Duke of Northumberland has given my Brother Ten thousand pounds ! and the manner of bestowing this noble gift was so great as anything I have ever heard or read of,

"The lucky have whole years and those they choose
Th' unlucky have but hours and those they lose"

but poor fellow he is I fear in a wretched state of health, yet he looked the other night in Macbeth as beautiful as ever ; he is never now without his cough, which they say is gouty (certainly the disorder is flying about him) and if it would come to a good fit that he woud be well. It seems a strange thing to say that a man recovers his health by the loss of his limbs. So thinks poor Mr. Piozzi I suppose, poor dear Soul, how he has suffered from it ! and *you* ! You will perhaps scarcely believe how often and how tenderly I think of you, and how deeply I regret the distance between us, but it is nevertheless true. Pray dear Soul let me hear from you very soon and tell me truly how your health and spirits hold out the incessant claims upon them. I have got Cecilia home from school, she is very well at present, but to keep her well she must have sea bathing in the summer. Is there any place of that sort near Brynn Bella ? if so, I shoud hope I might be able to see you sometimes. I have got a genteel well principled young woman as a Governess for her, and my family which would consist of seven or eight persons would perhaps be too large to be accommodated very near you. Oh that you were again at Streatham ! Remember me very kindly to dear Mr Piozzi. God bless and support you my very dear friend. I am unalterably

Your affte

S. SIDDONS [1]

I lost in the fire a Toilette of the poor Queen of France, a piece of beautiful point Lace an ell wide and five yards long which having belonged to so interesting a person of course I regret more than all other things. It could not have cost at

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[1] For another exceptionally fine letter of Mrs. Siddons to Mrs. Piozzi see "Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale," Chapter III., p. 148.

me very kindly to dear Mr. Piozzi. God bless and support
you my very dear friend! I am unalterably

Your affte.

S. Siddons

I lost in the fire a Toilette of the poor Queen of France
a piece of beautiful Point lace an ell wide and five
yards long which having belongd to so interesting a person
of course I regret more than all the other things — It
could not have cost at first, less than a thousand pounds
I add to wear it only in the Trial Scene of Hermione in the
Winters Tale, it covered me all over from head to foot —
I suppose my lopes could not be repaired for twelve hundred
pounds. but God be praisd — that Sa. fire did not breakin
out while the people were in the House!!!

LAST PAGE OF A.L.S. OF MRS. SIDDONS TO MRS. PIOZZI AFTER THE FIRE AT COVENT GARDEN THEATRE.

first less than a thousand pounds. I us'd to wear it *only* in the trial scene of Hermione in the Winters Tale, it covered me all over from head to foot. I suppose my losses could not be repaired for Twelve hundred pounds, but God be praised that the fire did not break out while the people were in the house ! ! !

Fine letters from Mrs. Siddons fetch from £10 to £20. A specimen may be obtained for £5 or even less, for I note an invitation "to dine at pretty Westbourne" has just been sold (February 28, 1910) for £2 14s. The letters of the brother of the great actress, J. P. Kemble, sell at from £1 to £3 each. He evidently (according to one of the specimens in my collection) moved in very high circles. This letter is addressed to Sir Thomas Lawrence, whose fatal relations with the Siddons family circle have already been alluded to :—

My dear Lawrence,—I am this moment come from Carlton House. I did not myself see the Prince of Wales ; but His Royal Highness desired Mr. McMahon to tell me how highly pleased he is with the Drawing ; but would submit to your consideration whether or not the forehead is a little too round and in obedience to His Royal Highness I do submit it to your consideration. The Prince, my dear Lawrence, is charmed with the Portrait. Mr. Smirke writes to-night to the Engraver at Birmingham

Yours,

J. P. Kemble

Friday, *October* 28, 1808.

The most curious letters of that mysterious personage the Chevalier d'Éon in my collection relate to two public exhibitions of his skill as a fencer, given in Bath during the year 1796. While staying

in his native Tonnerre the *ex-chargé d'affaires* gave a supper in honour of Prince Henry of Prussia. In a bundle of his MSS. I bought in France I found the bill for the historic feast. It was not expensive, and must surely have been enjoyed *tête-à-tête*.

The letters of artists do not as a rule command large prices, but there are many exceptions. I have never seen a letter from Sir A. Vandyke or Sir P. Lely, but Mr. W. V. Daniell prices the following letter of William Hogarth to his wife in Dorset at £35 :—

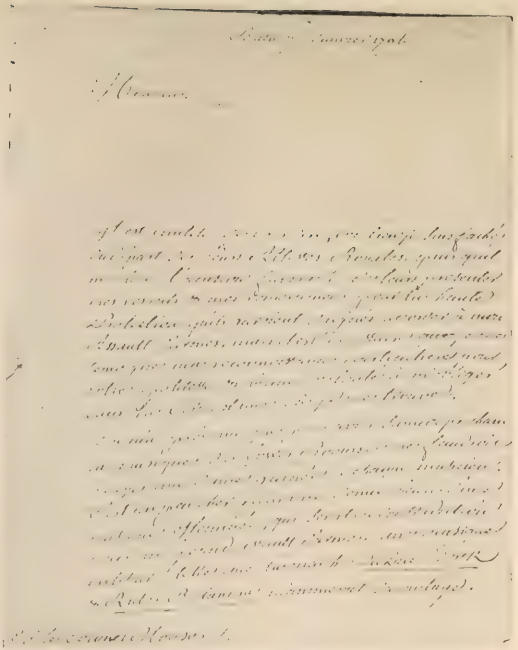
LONDON, *June* 6 1749

DEAR JENNY,—I write to you now, not because I think you may expect it only, but because I find a pleasure in it, which is more than I can say of writing to any body else, and I insist on it you don't take it for a mere complement; your last letter pleased more than I'll say, but this I will own if the postman should knock at the door in a week's time after the receipt of this, I shall think there is more musick in't than the beat of a kettle drum, and if the words to the tune are made by you (to carry on metafor) and brings news of your all coming soon to Town, I shall think the words much better than the musick, but don't hasten out of a scene of pleasure to make me one. You'll find by the enclosed that I shall be glad to be a small contributer to it. I don't know whether or no you know that Garrick was going to be married to the Violetta when you went away. I supt with him last night and had a deal of talk about her. I can't write any more than what this side will contain; you know I won't turn over a new leaf I am so obstinate, but then I am no less obstinate in loving you

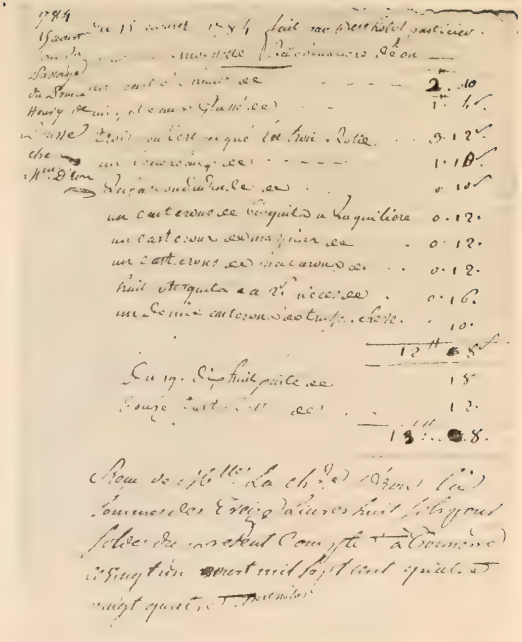
Your affectionate Husband,

WM. HOGARTH.

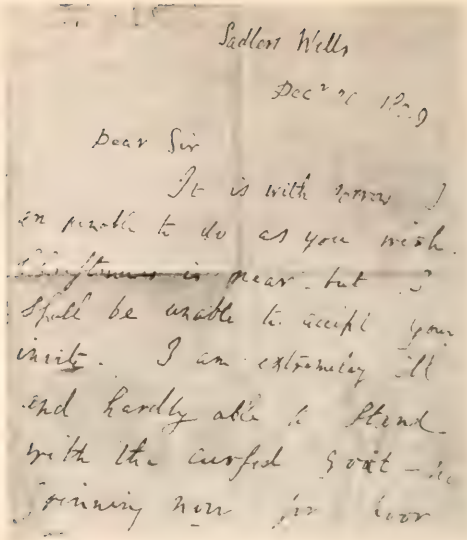
Letters of Sir Joshua Reynolds, George Romney, and George Morland always fetch from £3 to £10 or more. I gave £7 7s. for the letter of Reynolds to



LETTER OF THE CHEVALIER D'ÉON TO COLONEL MONSON, BATH, JANUARY 7, 1790.



ACCOUNT FOR SUPPER GIVEN BY THE CHEVALIER D'ÉON TO PRINCE HENRY OF PRUSSIA, AUGUST 15, 1784.

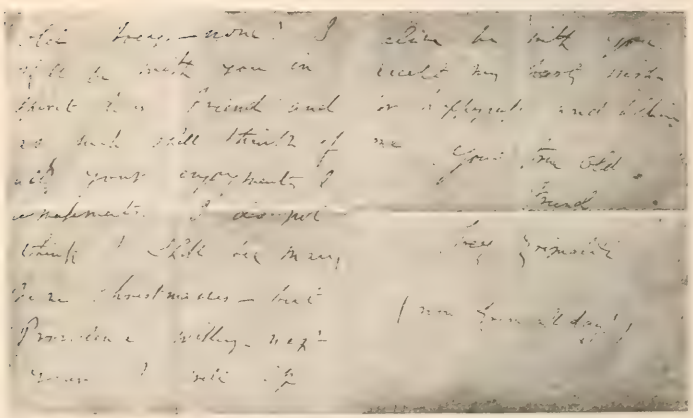


Sadlers Wells

Decr 20 1829

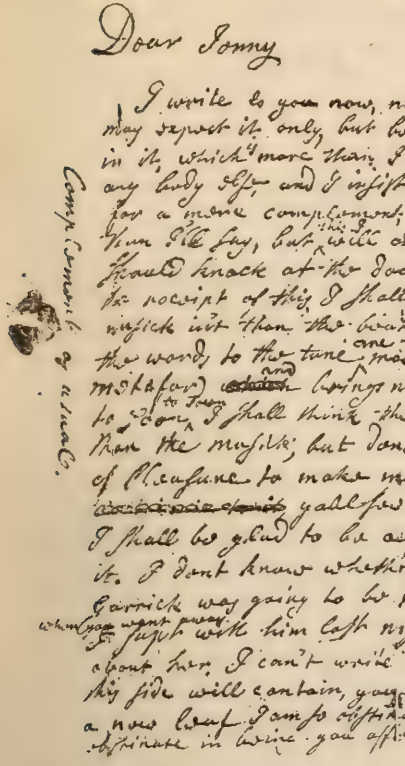
Dear Sir

It is with sorrow I am unable to do as you wish. ~~Christmas is~~ near but I shall be unable to accept your invite. I am extremely ill and hardly able to stand with the cursed Gout — no grinning now for poor



ONE OF THE LAST LETTERS EVER WRITTEN BY GRIMALDI, THE GREAT CLOWN, DECEMBER 20, 1829.

Crabbe, covering Dr. Johnson's criticism of the poem submitted to him. The examples of Romney and Morland I possess are placed behind the frontispieces



A.L.S. OF WILLIAM HOGARTH TO HIS WIFE, JANUARY 6, 1749.

of standard works on their Art. The letter of poor Morland is melancholy reading, and suggestive of the squalor in which he moved and died :—

George Morland to Mr. Graham.

DEAR GRAHAM,—I am worse than ever. Had an opium pill to take last night, and as I thought two must do me more good than one, I took them both. I expected it was *up*.

However I am not quite so bad, but I will use my best endeavour to get on for you this week the whole of which I must keep quiet.

Good bie,

G. MORLAND.

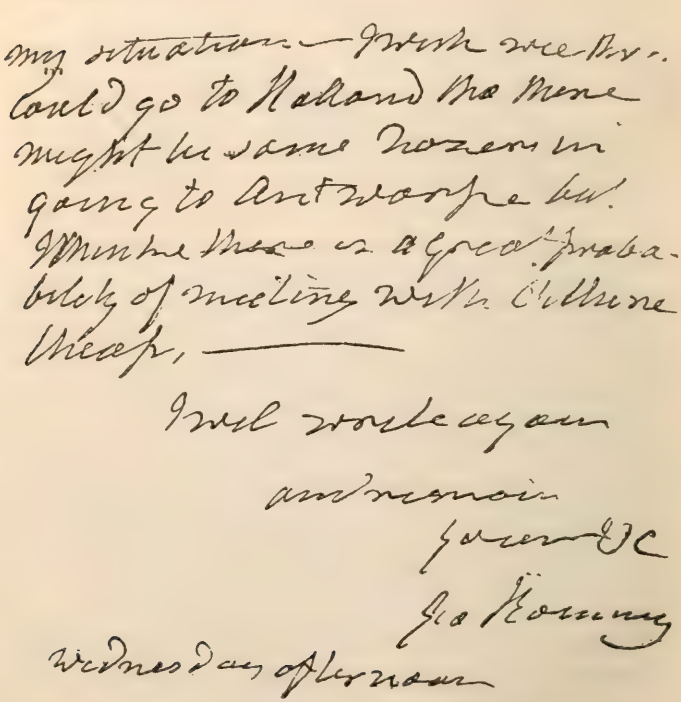
Wednesday

On other side—

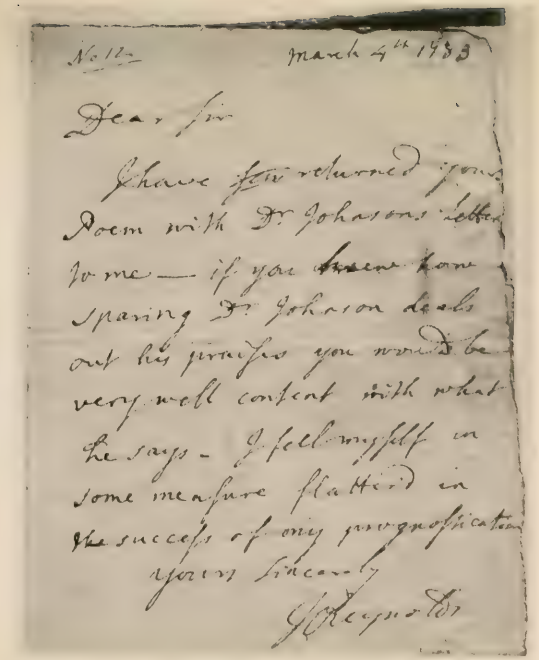
John Graham Esqre

30 Red Lion Square London

Postmark—May 6 1801



LAST PAGE OF AN A.L.S. BY THE PAINTER GEORGE ROMNEY.



No 12 March 4th 1783

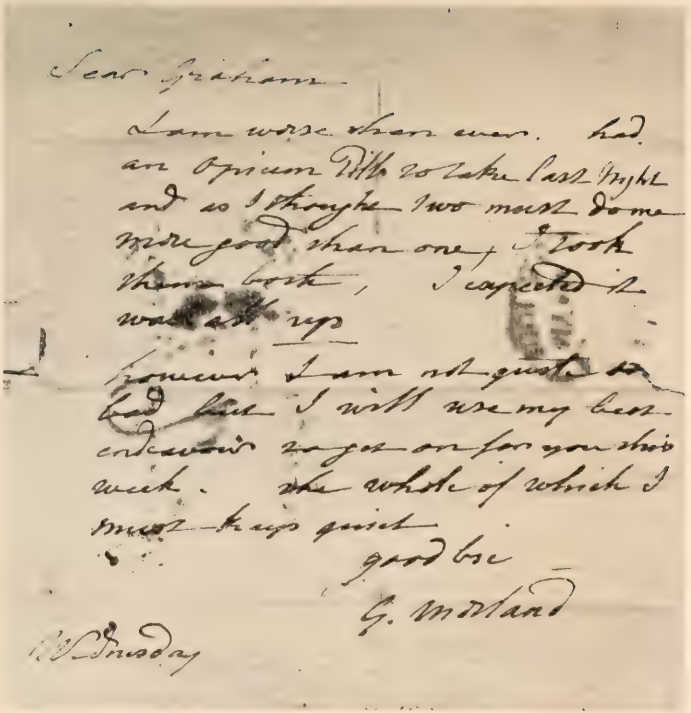
Dear Sir

I have ~~few~~ returned your Poem with Dr. Johnsons Letter to me — if you ~~knew~~ how sparing Dr. Johnson deals out his praises you would be very well content with what he says — I fell myself in some measure flattered in the success of my prognostication

Yours sincerely

J. Reynolds

A.L.S. OF SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS TO GEORGE CRABBE, MARCH 4, 1783.



Dear Graham

I am worse than ever. had an Opium Pill to take last Night and as I thought two must do me more good than one, I took them both, I expected it was all up

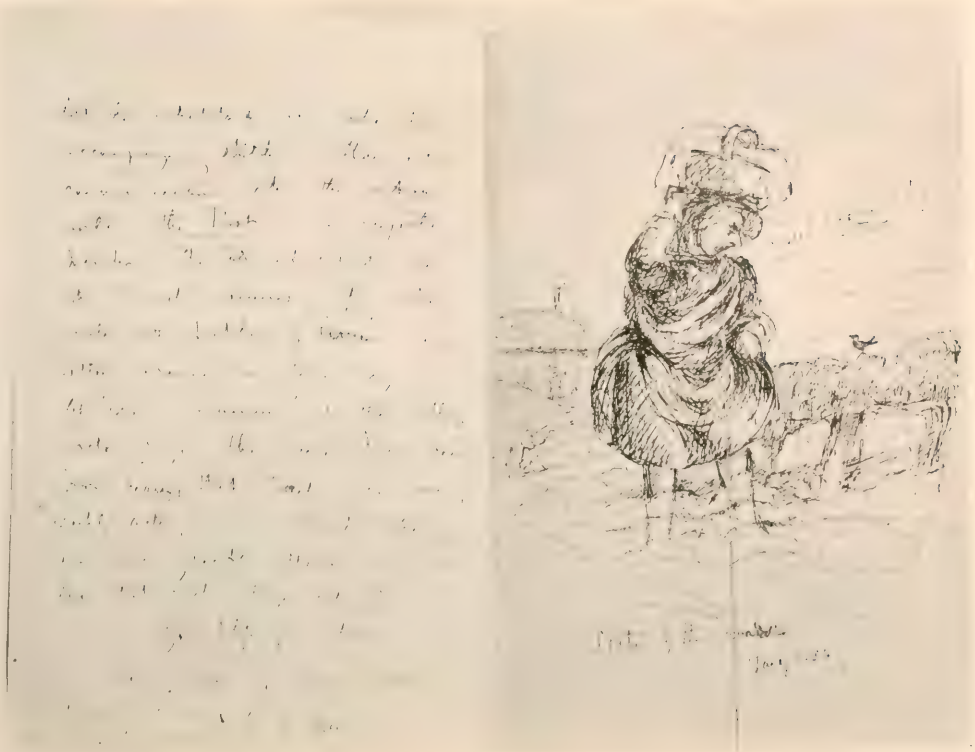
however I am not quite so bad but I will use my best endeavour to get on for you this week. the whole of which I must keep quiet

good bye

G. Morland

Wednesday

A.L.S. OF GEORGE MORLAND.



TWO PAGES OF ILLUSTRATED LETTER FROM THE HONBLE. MRS. NORTON TO A SISTER, JULY, 1854.

In May, 1810, George Cruikshank, born in 1792, was in the thick of the fight which the caricaturists waged against Napoleon. It was seventy years later than the date of Morland's grotesque scrawl that there appeared in *The Times* (December 30, 1871) a letter from "Glorious George" claiming to be the originator of the idea of "Oliver Twist." On the following day Charles Manby, a mutual friend of the writer and the artist, thus writes to the latter:—

60 Westbourne Terrace Hyde Park
December 30 1871

My dear old friend,—I see with pleasure that, as I expected you have in the "Times" of this day vindicated your claim to originating the story of "Oliver Twist," which I have a notion you told me of a long time ago. I am persuaded that Dickens himself, would, with his inherent love of truth, have confirmed your statement, and it is a pity that his historian should have written vehemently on the subject. Be prepared with your Sketches, etc. to maintain the position which will be hotly contested, although in reality there is so much positive merit in all that Dickens originated and did, that there is not any necessity for laying claim to the works of others,—his collaborateurs. I should much like someday to see the sketches in question—that is if there is not any indiscretion in the request. I will ask you to allow me to call upon you and look over them.

With every good wish for the New Year believe me
Your's very sincerely
Charles Manby

Lt Col: Cruikshank.

On January 2, 1872, Cruikshank replies as follows:—

263 Hampstead Road N W

My dear old Friend,—It is so long since I illustrated "Oliver Twist," that I do not at present know where the original sketches are, but will look over the bundles of papers for them and when found will let you know, and shall be

highly pleased if you will visit my studio and take a peep at them, although some are so rough that they are hardly worth looking at, having been done in such haste. The sketches that Dr. Sheldon Mackenzie alludes to of "The Life of a London Thief" were made about 50 years back, when Charles Dickens was a little boy, and it is a chance if I ever see these sketches again, but I have a list of the subjects which I will show you.

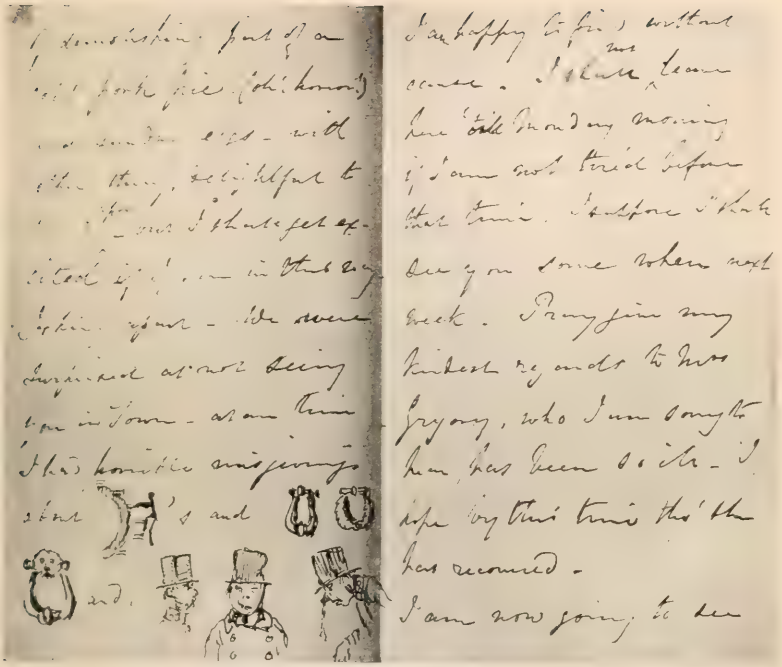
Wishing you and your's a happy New Year and many of them,

I am, Dear Friend, Your's truly
GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

Charles Manby Esqre CE etc.

I often wonder that some zealous collector does not confine his attention solely to letters illustrated by the writers. I have already mentioned the achievements in this connection of Thackeray[1] and Sir Frank Lockwood. I have come across illustrated letters in the correspondence of Sir Joshua Reynolds and Mrs. Piozzi; Mrs. Norton embellished her letters with admirable sketches of a humorous character, and so did John Leech, Hablot K. Browne, Frederick Barnard, and, of course, George Cruikshank. In my three grangerised volumes relating to the history of *Punch* are letters illustrated by Sir Francis Burnand (who delighted his friends with this kind of *jeu d'esprit* before he left Cambridge), Mr. G. A. Sala, Mr. Linley Sambourne, Mr. H. Furniss, Mr. Phil May, and Mr. E. T. Reed. One of the most curious illustrated letters in my possession is a rough sketch of a projected bath at Windsor, made by King George III. for the benefit of Wyatt, the architect. Napoleon often added sketch-plans of battles and movements of troops to his letters, and Louis Philippe was fond of making quaint drawings, which are sometimes to be

[1] See *ante*, p. 198.



PORTION OF ILLUSTRATED LETTER BY JOHN LEECH.

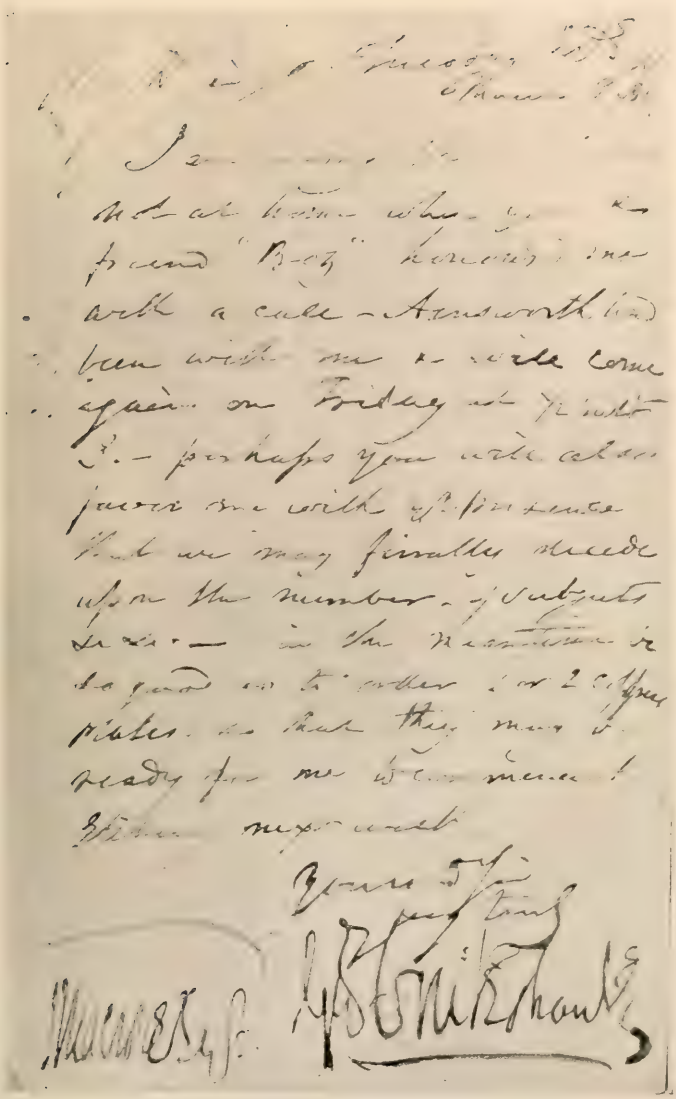
PAGE OF ILLUSTRATED A.L.S. FROM MR. WHEELER TO SIR F. BURNAND.

found even on the official documents which passed through his hands. It was from a rough sketch in a letter of Mr. Cobden, now in possession of Mr. T. Fisher Unwin, that we find the genesis of the idea of the "big" and "little loaf," which has achieved something very like political immortality.

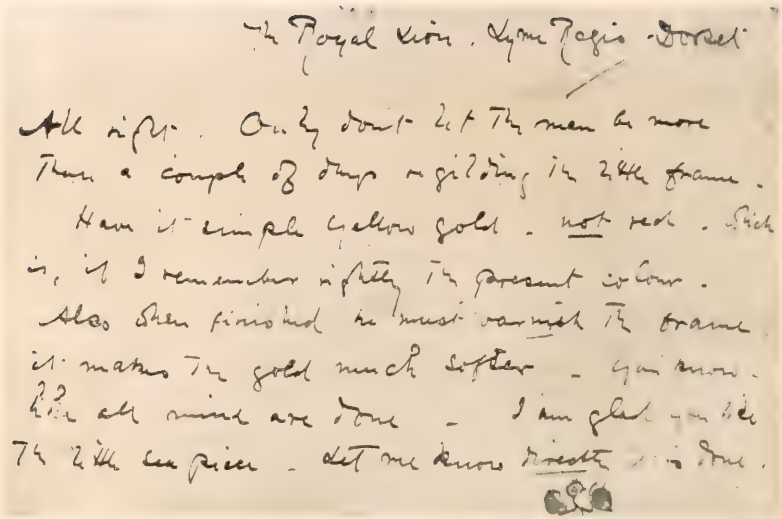
ILLUSTRATED A.L.S. OF FRED BARNARD RELATING TO THE PLATES OF "DOMBEY AND SON," N.D.

Charles Peace, as he appeared sitting in the dock, when I defended him for murder in 1879.
F.L.

PORTRAIT OF CHARLES PEACE, THE MURDERER, ON A.L.S. OF SIR FRANK LOCKWOOD, WHO DEFENDED HIM, WRITTEN IN 1888.



A.L.S. OF GEORGE CRUICKSHANK, SEPTEMBER, 1836, ABOUT DICKENS'S FIRST CALL ON HIM.



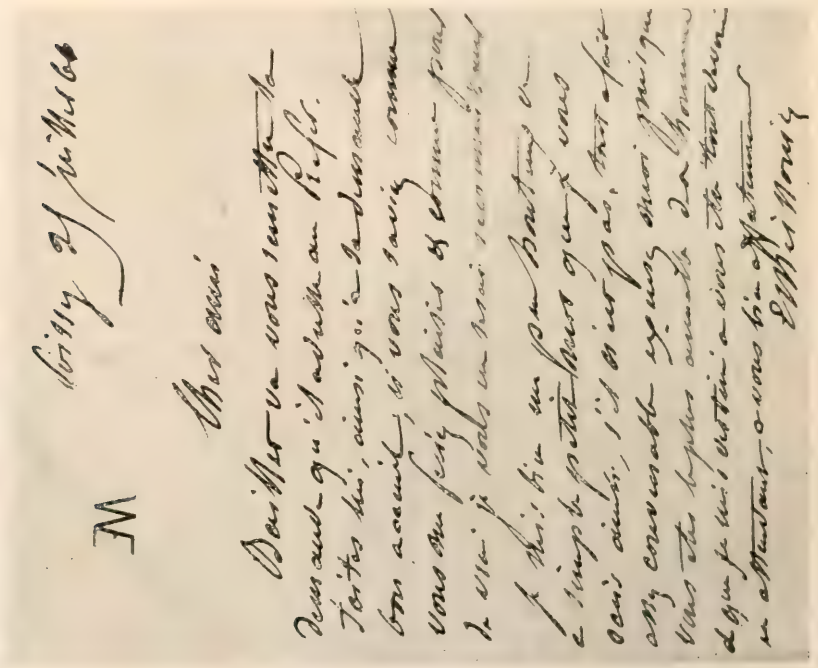
The Royal Lion. Lyme Regis - Dorset

All right. Only don't let the man be more than a couple of days regilding the little frame.

Have it simple yellow gold - not red. Which is, if I remember rightly the present colour.

Also when finished he must varnish the frame it makes the gold much softer - you know - like all mind are done - I am glad you like the little sea piece - let me know directly it is done.

POSTCARD OF JAMES WHISTLER FROM LION HOTEL, LYME REGIS, CIRCA 1888.



Poissy 25 juillet 61

M

Cher ami

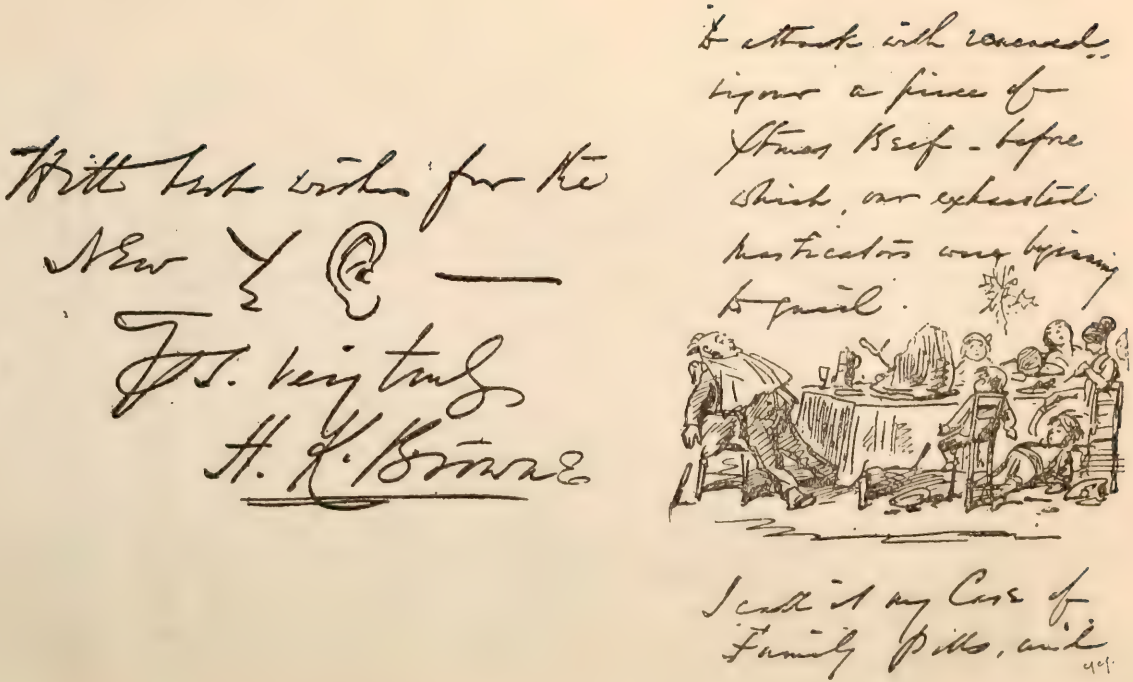
Bouillet va vous remettre la demande qu'il adresse au Préfet. Toutes lui, ainsi qu'à la demande bon accueil, si vous savez comme vous me faire plaisir & comme pour de vrai je vous en serai reconnaissant

Je suis bien un peu honteux vu & simple petit mot que je vous écris ainsi, s'il n'est pas, tout à fait assez convenable excusez moi puisque vous êtes le plus aimable de hommes & que je suis certain à vous être tout chose en attendant, à vous bien affectueux

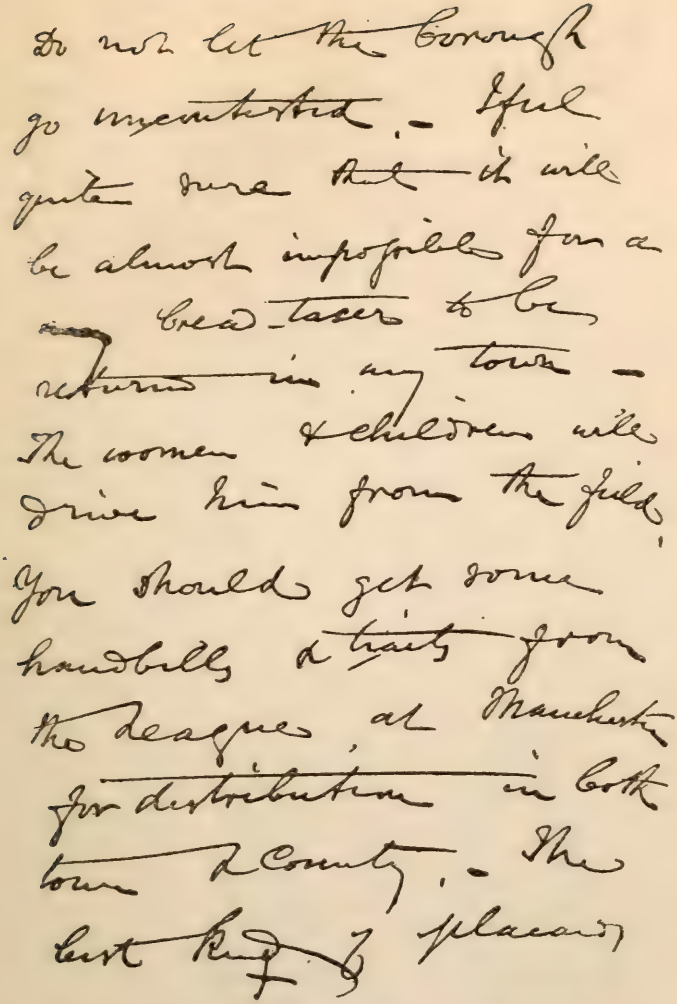
E. Meissonier

FIRST PAGE OF A.L.S. OF THE PAINTER MEISSONIER, JULY 25, 1861.

PORTRAITS OF SIR R. REID (NOW LORD LOREBURN) AND THE LATE SIR FRANK LOCKWOOD ON AN ILLUSTRATED LETTER WRITTEN BY THE LATTER DURING THE PARNELL COMMISSION.



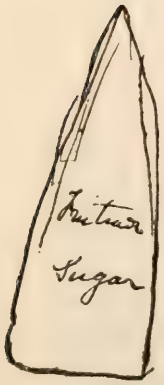
TWO PAGES OF AN ILLUSTRATED LETTER BY HABLOT K. BROWNE.



TWO PAGES OF A LETTER FROM RICHARD COBDEN IN "THE FORTIES."

(By courtesy of Mr. William Darby, Edgbaston.)

& handbills are the pictorial ones, representing the great & little loaves.



X

AUTOGRAPH COLLECTING IN FRANCE

CHAPTER X

AUTOGRAPH COLLECTING IN FRANCE

Autograph letters of Napoleon—His associates and contemporaries—Other French autographs

"I cannot write well because my mind is engaged on two subjects at once; one, my ideas; the other, my handwriting. The ideas go on fastest, and then goodbye to the letters and the lines! I can only dictate now. It is very convenient to dictate. It is just as if one were holding a conversation" (Napoleon).—GOURGAUD, p. 261.

THE subjects of autograph collecting and autograph dealing in France, as well as the wealth of French literature dealing with the whole subject, and the abundance of collections of facsimiles, have already been incidentally alluded to. The business now carried on by M. Noël Charavay was founded in 1843 by his father, M. Jacques Charavay, who died in 1867. He was succeeded by his son, Stephen Charavay, who lived till 1899. At his funeral an eloquent address was delivered by M. Anatole France. Five years before the autograph business had been made over by M. Stephen Charavay to his brother, Noël Charavay, who now carries it on. In 1865 M. Gabriel Charavay, the brother of Jacques

Charavay, acquired the goodwill and connection of M. Laverdet, one of the earliest dealers in autographs. His son and successor, Eugène, died young in 1892, and the head of the house is now the widow of Gabriel Charavay. Monthly catalogues are issued by both firms under the respective titles of *Bulletin d'Autographes* and *Revue des Autographes*. The first publication is now (1910) in its 63rd, the other in its 45th year. Autograph collectors would do well to study both, as English letters are frequently offered for sale in them, and the price of Napoleonic MSS. and similar *rariora* is, as a rule, much less in England than in France. I strongly recommend beginners in autograph collecting to carefully read the introduction to the fine Bovet catalogue, afterwards published as a pamphlet by M. Stephen Charavay. The four volumes, entitled "L'Isographie des Hommes Célèbres," are of inestimable use in acquiring familiarity with the handwriting of celebrated French men and women. M. Jacques Charavay and his sons are responsible as "experts" (and in France autograph "experts" have an official character) for the compilation of nearly the whole of the elaborate catalogues of autograph sales which have taken place in Paris since 1843. The solitary exception to this assertion is the sale of the MSS. of Madame Récamier. It was Jacques Charavay and his two successors who presided over the dispersals of the autograph collections formed in succession by Brunet, Yémeniz, Fillon, Bovet, Piot, Champfleury, Pichon, and Dablin.[1] A list of these catalogues down to 1902 was prepared

[1] It was at this sale I acquired the "House-expenses book" of Napoleon at St. Helena and the correspondence of Poniatowski.

by M. Edmund Brébion and published. It is already out of print.

Of Napoleon I. as a scribe my friend Dr. J. Holland Rose writes me as follows :—

Napoleon was the greatest letter-writer of all time. The number of letters written or dictated by him up to the end of the Waterloo Campaign is 22,061 ; many more belong to the subsequent period, and some 2,000 or 3,000 letters have been found since the publication of the "Correspondance de Napoléon," published by order of Napoleon III.

On very many occasions he wrote or dictated thirty or forty letters and dispatches in one day. A well-known example of his epistolary activity is that recorded by a Saxon Colonel, von Odleben, who describes him while staying at Düben shortly before the Battle of Leipsic, October, 1813. In those anxious days Napoleon kept his secretaries on the watch day and night, and is known to have sent off six important letters in the small hours of October 12th, shortly before he set out for Leipsic. In later days he wrote comparatively few of his letters himself, simply because his writing was almost illegible.

His early letters to Josephine were of course in his own handwriting ; they are remarkable, among the love-letters of great men, for their passionate ardour : which, however, soon cooled under the frivolities and neglect of his Consort.

Some of his letters never have been deciphered. The present writer has in his possession an excellent photograph of a long Napoleon letter which is a rough draft of a proclamation to his army after the great victory at Rivoli in January, 1797. It has been much erased and altered. The skill of experts at Paris and London has failed to decipher the contents of three-fourths of this scrawl, yet the original was sold recently for a very large sum of money.

I have already mentioned[1] the seven Napoleon letters sold in London in 1904 for £350. In the following year I was much interested in three letters which M. Noël Charavay offered for sale at the

[1] See *ante*, Chapter I., p. 32.

modest price of £100, throwing light on certain negotiations between Bonaparte and the Bourbons, which supplement a curt letter of the former in the Morrison Collection declining to entertain certain proposals. The three letters sold in 1905 are in the easily recognisable handwriting of Louis XVIII. (known in 1801, when they were written, as the Comte de Lille), and in them he puts before the Abbé de Montesquieu, who was acting as a go-between in the matter, the reasons which should induce the First Consul to facilitate the return of the descendant of St. Louis to the throne of his forefathers. In the first of the series (dated Warsaw, March 22, 1801) Louis congratulates himself on the idea which has prompted him to take the initiative in the matter. He writes as follows: "Buonaparte is to-day the greatest of our country's soldiers. He will be her saviour. As the Father of the French it is for me to make the first advance. . . . I charge you to communicate to him the following arguments: the restoration of the Monarchy is necessary; the existence of the Republic has only proved its impossibility; the only Republicans in France are abstract reasoners, faddists, &c." In a last and final memorandum he says: "When I appeal to Buonaparte, do I do so merely to march over the bodies of the dead? If glory has chosen him to restore the Monarchy, let glory be the witness of my engagements." At the same time he energetically denies the allegation that he has ever encouraged or approved any project for the assassination of the First Consul.

In February of the present year I saw in London a superb Napoleonic letter of great historic importance, and authenticated by a declaration made by

the Duke of Wellington. This letter once belonged to an English Prime Minister. It was written on May 1, 1803, when the delusive Treaty (or Truce) of Amiens was about to be torn up. A part of the letter has appeared, but I now give it *in extenso* with a translation[1] :—

St. Cloud 4½.

Je recois votre lettre, qui m'a été remise à la Malmaison, je désire que la conference ne se tourne pas en parlage—mettez vous y froid, altier et même un peu fier.

Si la notte (*sic*) contient le mot ultimatum fait lui sentir que ce mot renferme celui de guerre, que cette manière de negocier est d'un superieur à un inferieur, si la notte ne contient pas ce mot, fait qu'il le mette, en lui observant qu'il faut enfin savoir à qui nous en tenir, que nous sommes las de etat d'anxieté—que jamais en n'obtiendra de nous, ce que l'on a obtenu des dernières années des Bourbons, que nous ne sommes plus ce peuple que recevoit un commissaire à Dunkerque, que l'ultimatum remis, tout deviendra rompu.

Effrayez le sur les suites de cette remise S'il est inébranlable, accompagnez le dans votre salon sur le point de vous quitter, dit lui "mais le Cap, et l'ile de Gorée, sont ils evacués" radoucissez un peu la fin de la Conférence, et invitez le à revenir avant d'écrire à sa Cour, enfin que vous puisiez lui dire l'impression qu'elle a fait sur moi, qu'elle pouvoit être diminuée, par l'assurance de l'evacuation de Cap et de l'ile de Gorée.

Nap.

[Translation.]

St. Cloud 4½

I am in receipt of your letter which was given me at Malmaison. I desire that the conference should not end in idle words. Be cold in your demeanour—haughty and if need be proud. If the note contains the word ultimatum, let him feel that this word means war, and that this manner of negotiating is that of a superior to an inferior ; if the note does not contain this word see that he uses it saying that we

[1] See "Life of Napoleon," by J. Holland Rose, Litt. D., vol. i. p. 424.

must really know where we are, that we are weary of this state of tension and that they will never obtain from us, what they obtained in the last years of the Bourbons, that we are no longer the people to receive a Commissioner at Dunkirk and that the ultimatum once delivered everything will be broken off. Frighten him as to the consequence of this act on his part, if he is unwavering take him to your drawing-room and as he is on the point of leaving say to him "But the Cape and the Isle of Gorée, are they evacuated?" Then towards the end of the interview tone down matters a little, and suggest his coming back before writing to his Court, so that you may be able to tell him the impression which the conference has made upon me, and that it could be softened by the assurance of the evacuation of these places.

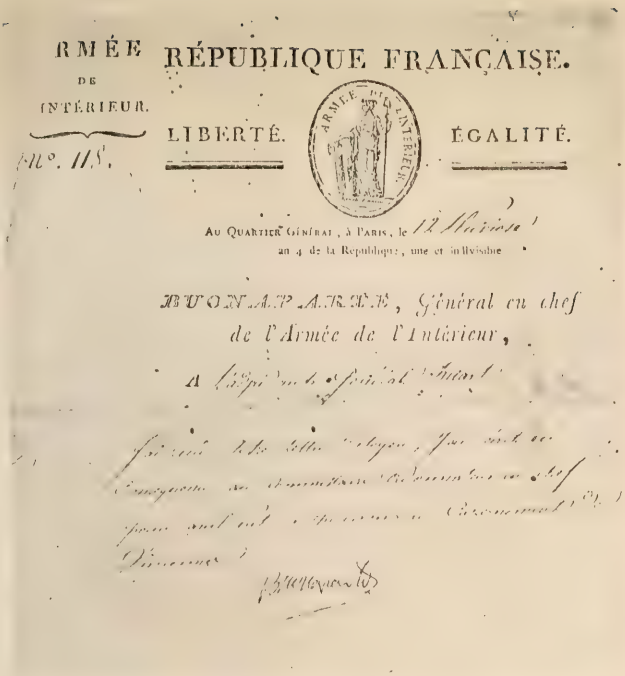
NAP.

This letter was purchased by the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, whose attention I called to its great interest. Lord Crawford probably possesses one of the finest sets of Revolutionary and Napoleonic MSS. in the hands of any private collector. He is at the present moment engaged in cataloguing them.

. . . . .

Of the various autographs of Napoleon in my own collection, the earliest (now reproduced) is dated February 1, 1796. Napoleon then signed himself "Buonaparte." He was then Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Interior. The last I possess consist of a note in pencil written at St. Helena and the various hieroglyphics with which he controlled the entries in Pierron's journal of household disbursements. All the autographs of the Bonaparte family fetch high prices, especially letters of Madame Mère (Napoleon's mother), Josephine and Marie Louise (his wives), and the sisters Eliza, Pauline, and Caroline. Letters of his father are now extremely difficult to obtain, although ten years ago they

RMÉE
DE
INTÉRIEUR.



N°. 118.

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE.

LIBERTÉ. ÉGALITÉ.

ARMÉE DE L'INTÉRIEUR

Au Quartier Général, à Paris, le 12 Pluviôse
an 4 de la République, une et indivisible

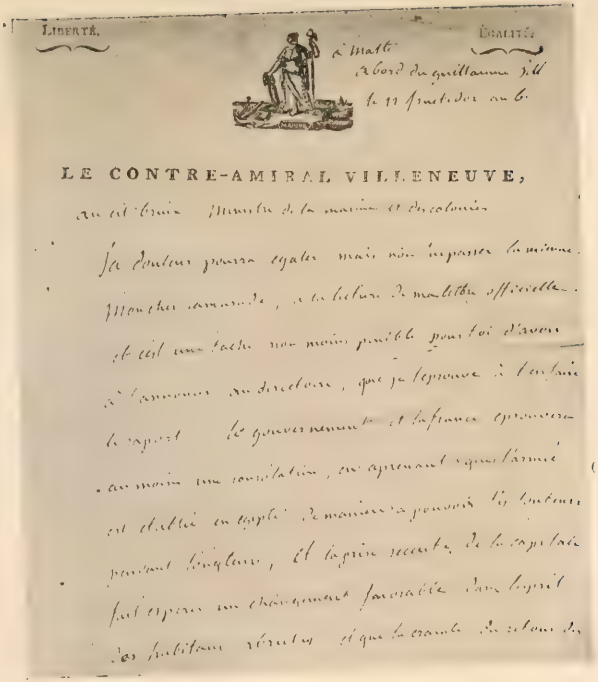
BUONAPARTE, Général en chef
de l'Armée de l'Intérieur,

A l'adjudant général Fiscal

J'ai reçu votre lettre citoyen, j'ai écrit en
conséquence au commissaire ordonnateur en chef
pour qu'il eût à [illegible] au Gouvernement
[illegible]

Buonaparte

EARLY SIGNATURE OF NAPOLEON I. AS "BUONAPARTE" ON MILITARY DOCUMENT, DATED FEBRUARY 1, 1796.



LIBERTÉ. ÉGALITÉ.

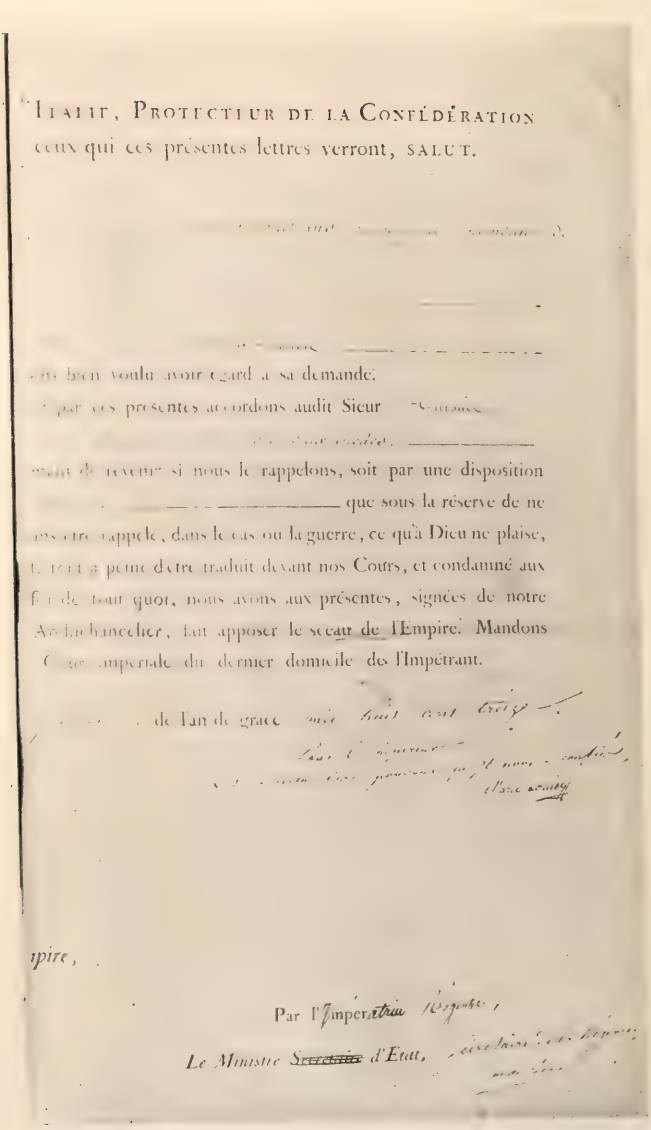
à Malte
Abord du guillaume Tell
le 11 fructidor an 6.

LE CONTRE-AMIRAL VILLENEUVE,

au cit. bruix Ministre de la marine et des colonies

Ja douleur pourra égaler mais non surpasser la mienne.
Mon cher camarade, à la lecture de ma lettre officielle.
et c'est une tache non moins pénible pour toi d'avoir
à t'annoncer au directoire, que je t'éprouve à t'en faire
le rapport. le gouvernement et la france éprouvera
au moins une consolation, en apprenant que l'armée
est établie en égypte de manière à pouvoir les soutenir
pendant longtems, et la prise récente de la capitale
fait espérer un changement favorable dans l'esprit
des habitans abrutis et que la crainte du retour des

FIRST PAGE OF A.L.S. OF ADMIRAL VILLENEUVE ANNOUNCING TO THE FRENCH MINISTER OF MARINE THE DISASTER OF THE NILE, SEPTEMBER, 1798.



ITALIE, PROTECTEUR DE LA CONFÉDÉRATION
ceux qui ces présentes lettres verront, SALUT.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] bien voulu avoir égard à sa demande.

[illegible] par ces présentes accordons audit Sieur [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] de revenir si nous le rappelons, soit par une disposition [illegible] que sous la réserve de ne [illegible] être rappelé, dans le cas où la guerre, ce qu'à Dieu ne plaise, [illegible] peine d'être traduit devant nos Cours, et condamné aux [illegible] de tout quoi, nous avons aux présentes, signées de notre Archichancelier, fait apposer le sceau de l'Empire. Mandons [illegible] impériale du dernier domicile de l'Impétrant.

[illegible] de l'an de grace [illegible]

[illegible]

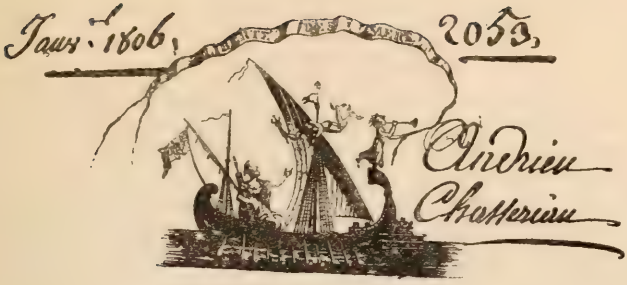
[illegible]

[illegible]pire,

Par l'Impératrice Régente,

Le Ministre ~~Secrétaire~~ d'Etat, [illegible]

SIGNATURE OF EMPRESS MARIE LOUISE AS REGENT, JULY, 1813.



Vous direz peut-être mon cher Decrès que j'vous fatigue
mais j'vous demande, et pour Andrieu et pour le bien
de la marine, que vous donniez aux officiers
Andrieu, membre de la légion, et Chasseriau, le
Commandement des deux bricks qui sont en construction
à Genès. Je vous assure, mon cher Decrès, que
ces tous-deux excellents officiers, et dont vous
ne pouvez manquer d'être fort content
Je vous embrasse de tout
mon cœur J. Bonaparte

A.L.S. OF JOSEPH BONAPARTE, AFTERWARDS KING OF SPAIN, JANUARY, 1806.

fetched only from £1 to £2. Letters of Talleyrand are not rare, but the one I now place before my readers possesses both exceptional interest and value.

Talleyrand to Napoleon I.

Sire,—La naissance d'un prince dans la famille de votre majesté est un évenement heureux pour tous ses sujets. Je dois en sentir davantage l'importance moi que le sentiment, le respect, et la reconnaissance attachent d'une maniere plus particulaire à votre majesté. Je la supplie d'agréer avec bonté l'expression de ma joie et les veux ardents que je forme à chaque moment de ma vie pour la prosperité de son auguste famille, elle ne peut être trop nombreuse pour la tranquillité et le bonheur du monde.

Je supplie votre majesté de recevoir avec bonté l'assurance du profond respect avec lequel je suis

de votre majesté impériale et royale
les très humble, très obeissant et très
fidèle serviteur et sujet
Charles Maurice Talleyrand
Prince de Bénévento

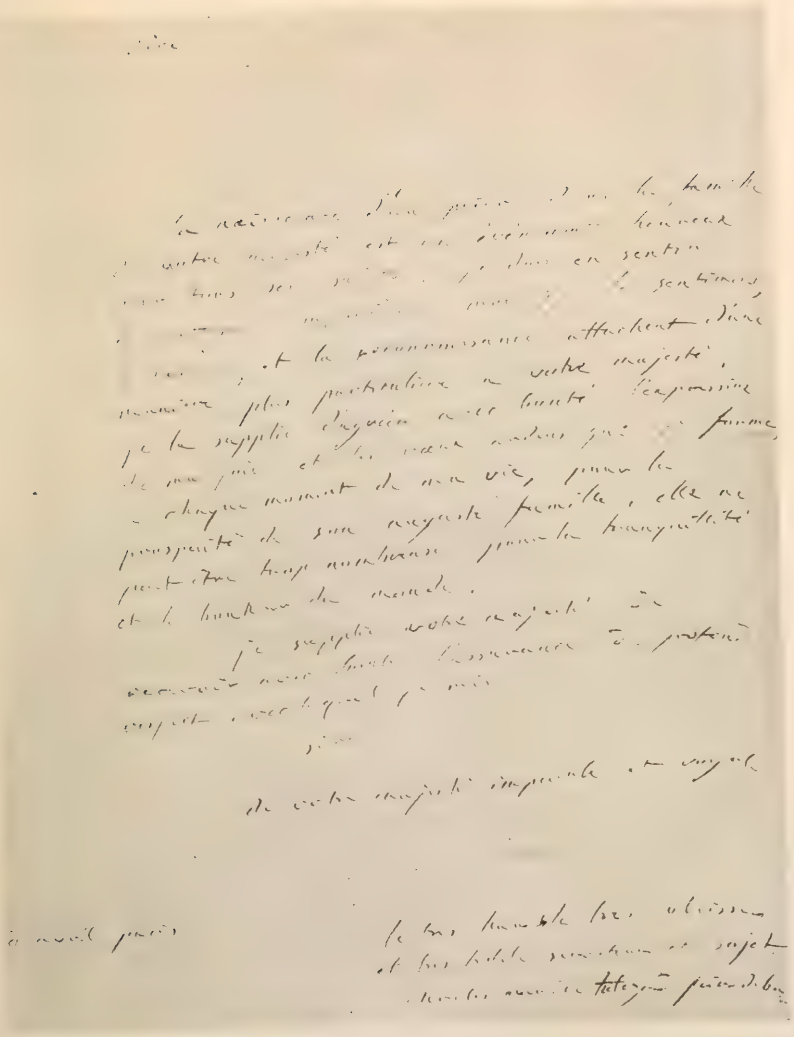
[Translation.]

Sire,—The birth of a prince in your Majesty's family is a happy event for all your subjects. I feel the importance of it more particularly on account of the sentiment, the respect and the gratitude which bind me to your Majesty. I entreat you to accept with favour my congratulations, as well as my ardent wishes, formed every moment of my life for the prosperity of your august family, which cannot be sufficiently numerous for the peace and prosperity of the world.

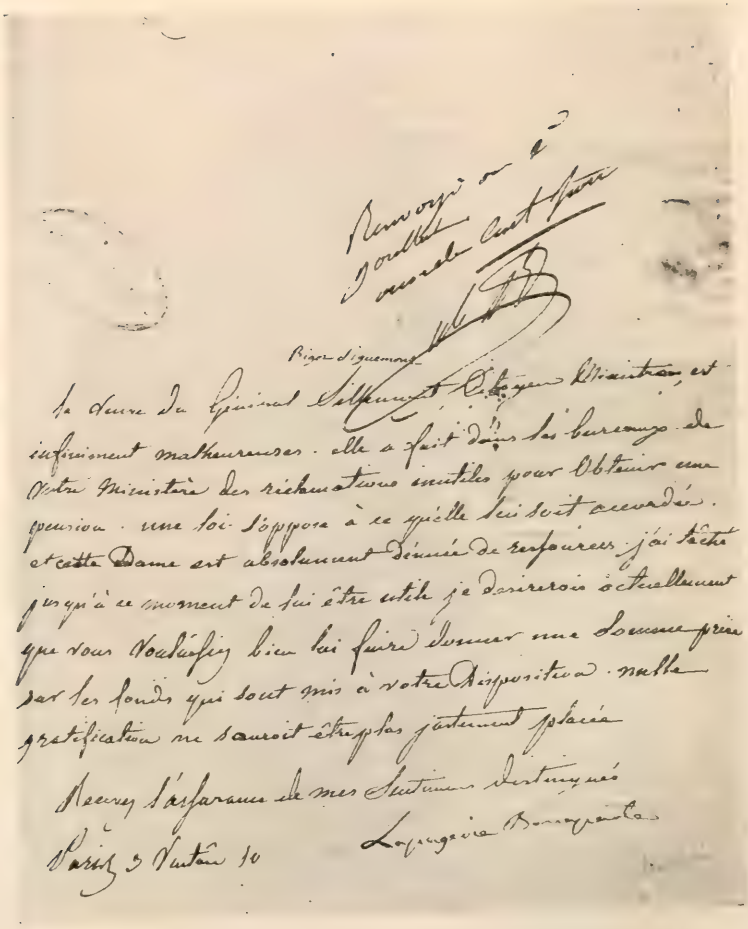
I entreat your Majesty to graciously accept the assurance of profound esteem with which I subscribe myself,

Your Imperial and Royal Majesty's
faithful servant and subject
Charles Maurice de Talleyrand,
Prince de Benevento.

In this letter, dated April 20, 1808, Talleyrand conveys to the Emperor, then at Bayonne, his con-



A.L.S. OF TALLEYRAND IN PARIS TO NAPOLEON I. AT BAYONNE CONGRATULATING HIM ON THE BIRTH OF NAPOLEON III., AT WHICH HE HAD BEEN PRESENT, APRIL, 1808.

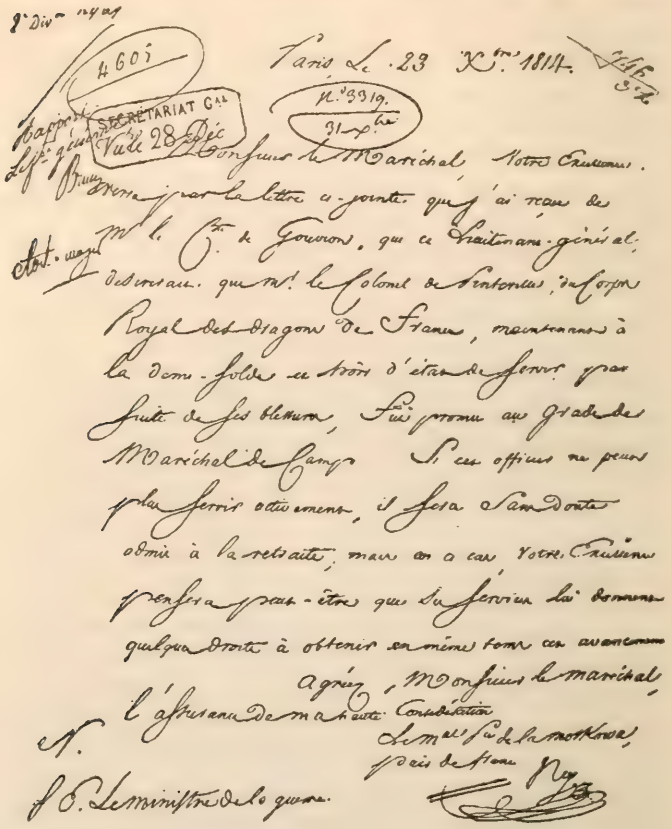


LETTER SIGNED BY THE EMPRESS JOSEPHINE, 3 VENTOSE AN X (FEBRUARY 22, 1802).

gratulations on the birth of the future Emperor, Napoleon III., at which he was present, and it must have been written the very day when that event took place. In his "Life of Napoleon III.," at page 10, the late Mr. Archibald Forbes writes thus: "It was on the afternoon of April 20, 1808, in her *hôtel* in the Rue Cérutti, now the banking-house of the Rothschilds in the Rue Lafitte, that Queen Hortense gave birth to her third son, the future Napoleon III. The Empress was then at Bordeaux and the Emperor at Bayonne. Talleyrand, with other high officers, had been commanded by Napoleon to be present at the impending accouchement of Queen Hortense. She thus notes regarding him: 'The visit of M. de Talleyrand aggravated my nervous state. He constantly wore powder, the scent of which was so strong that when he approached me I was nearly suffocated.' Talleyrand looked down solemnly on the new-born infant; some thirty years later, in Lady Tankerville's drawing-room in London, he did not choose to recognise the son of Hortense. The heir of the Empire was then an exile, and Talleyrand was serving a new master."

I possess letters and documents signed by Napoleon in Egypt (1798–99), at Rambouillet (1807), at Bayonne (1808), and on a pardon (1812). Possibly the finest is on a letter written in 1805 from the camp at Boulogne. I paid £5 for this; it is worth at least five times as much now. Letters of most of Napoleon's Marshals vary in value from 10s. to 20s. The rarest are those of Desaix (killed at Marengo) and Poniatowski (drowned in the Elster in 1813). They are worth from £3 to £5. An autograph letter of the Duc d'Enghien would probably bring its owner £20. I gave £5 for a good

L.S. Letters of Murat are worth from 15s. to 20s. I bought the letter written to Napoleon by him for 12s. 6d. in England. Letters of Eliza Bonaparte

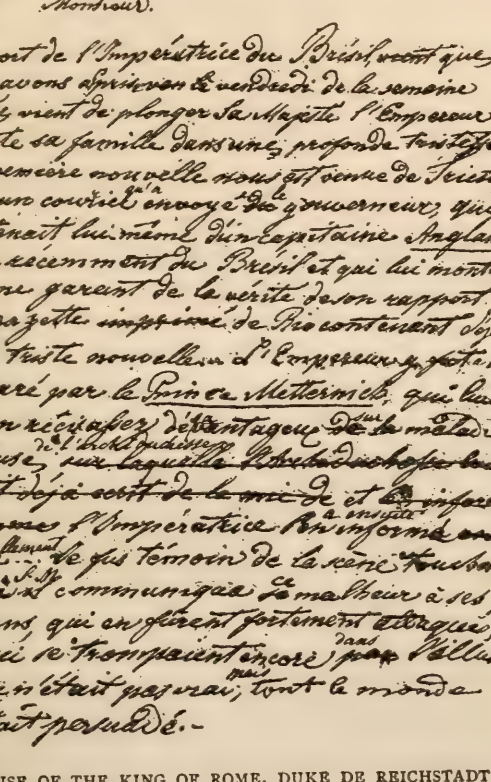


A.L.S. OF MARSHAL NEY, PARIS, DECEMBER 23, 1813.

and Marshal Masséna are now somewhat hard to procure, as those of the former are purchased by an historian, while the present holder of the title of the

Prince d'Essling is credited with being a liberal buyer of the MSS. of his gallant ancestor.

As regards the Roi de Rome (Napoleon II.), I



EXERCISE OF THE KING OF ROME, DUKE DE REICHSTADT, CIRCA 1827.

have already referred to his exercise-books. If he had lived he would have had a rival in the Comte de Chambord, of whose early compositions I now give

an example. His handwriting was excellent. Few boys at eight write anything like as well :—

Exercise of Count de Chambord, 1820–83.

François Premier après avoir vaillamment combattu sous les murs de Pavie, fut fait prisonnier par les Espagnols. Ce roy chevalier annonça son malheur à sa mère par ces mots écrits sur le champ de bataille 'Tout est perdu fors l'honneur.' Il fut conduit en Espagne et mené à Madrid où il fut gardé dans un château. Charlequint l'y laissa long temps sans l'aller voir.

St. Cloud *le* 18 *Juillet* 1828.

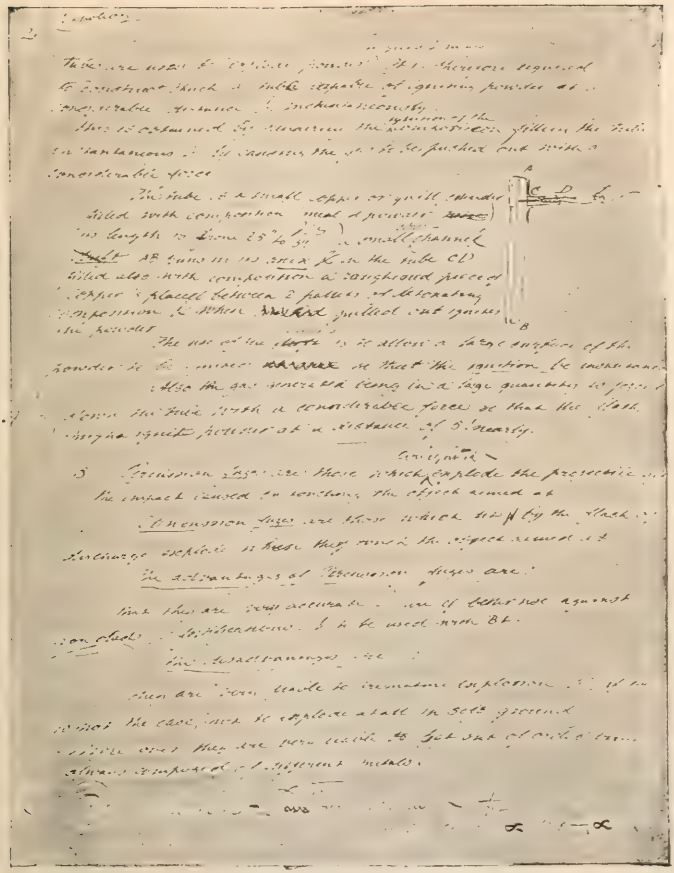
Nearly half a century later the writer preferred to lose his chances of a throne rather than renounce the white flag of his ancestors. If I mistake not he used the very words of Francis I. recorded on the copy-book page now in my possession!

Ordinary letters of Napoleon III. and the Empress Eugénie are priced at figures varying from £1 to £5. Like Napoleon I., the heir to the Napoleonic traditions was an industrious letter-writer. I possess many examples of his letters, ranging from 1830 to 1870. Here is one written during his detention in Germany :—

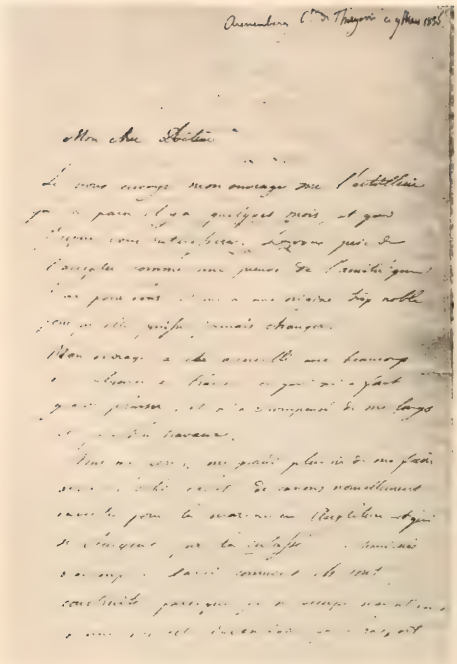
Wilhelmshoe *le* 29 *Oct.* 1870

Mon cher Lord Alfred,—Je suis bien touché de votre bon souvenir ; les sentiments qui renferme la lettre que vous avez bien voulu m'adresser m'ont fait grand plaisir et je vous remercie des nouvelles que vous me donnez de l'Imperatrice et de mon fils.

C'est une vrai consolation pour moi dans mon malheur que de recevoir des preuves de sympathie comme les votres, et je vous prie de dire à Lady Paget combien je suis sensible à son souvenir. Je vous prie aussi de vouloir bien vous charger de la lettre ci-jointe pour Sir John Burgoyne. Il m'a écrit



PORTION OF ESSAY ON GUNNERY WRITTEN BY THE LATE PRINCE IMPERIAL OF FRANCE WHILE A CADET AT THE WOOLWICH MILITARY ACADEMY.



PAGE OF A.L.S. OF NAPOLEON III. TO DR. O'MEARA, MARCH 9, 1836.

SKETCH BY THE LATE PRINCE IMPERIAL, CIRCA 1866.

une lettre très aimable, mais on m'a pas donné une adresse, et je perir à le remercier.

Recevez, mon cher Lord Alfred l'assurance de mes sentiments d'amitié.

NAPOLÉON.

Autograph letters of the Prince Imperial fetch very high prices indeed—anything from £5 upwards. The fine essay written by him at the Royal Military College, Woolwich, is worth quite twice that sum.

Letters of the Empress Eugénie are now generally priced higher than those of her husband, and I have known as much as £10 asked for one. Her Majesty is, or was, a zealous collector of autographs. Twenty years ago she was credited with possessing several letters of Catherine of Aragon, and a letter from Henry VII. to King and Queen Ferdinand and Isabella, of the highest historical importance.

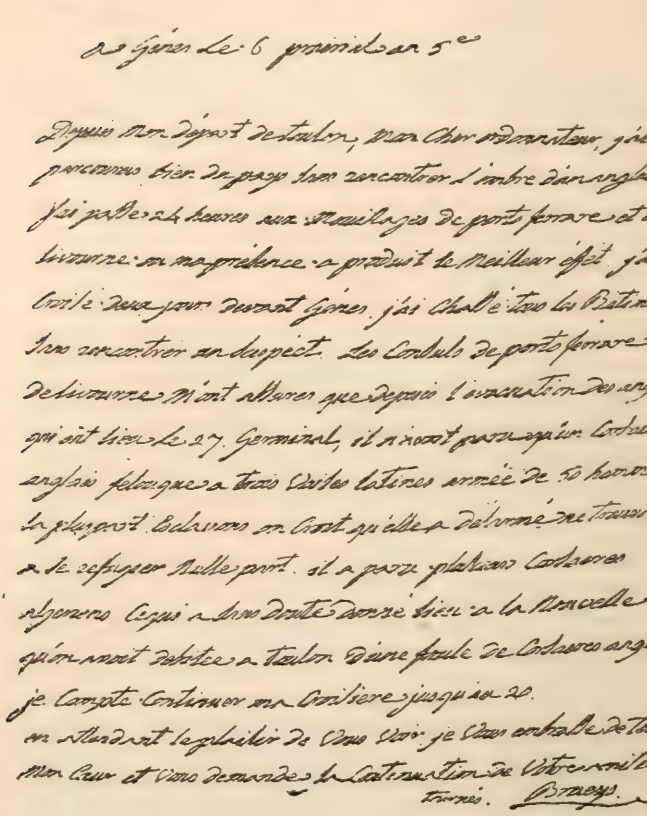
Fine letters of Louis XVIII., Charles X., and Louis Philippe can be obtained for a pound or less, and the correspondence of the statesmen who served under them is even cheaper. I gave 20 francs for a very confidential letter written to the last-named monarch by Count Molé (1781–1853) in July, 1835. It begins thus :—

SIRE,—His Majesty will probably recollect that by means of a little monthly arrangement I have very nearly silenced the grape-shot of the *Morning Chronicle*, obtaining occasionally even favourable mention. I have undertaken now and then to obtain news paragraphs from London. Here is the first. It is curious, very curious indeed. I believe in the truth of its contents. I have opened up relations with *The Times*."

At this point he suddenly drops the subject, and enlarges on certain gossip from the German Courts

and the lack of intelligence shown by the War Minister, General Bernard.

The official letters of the Revolutionary and



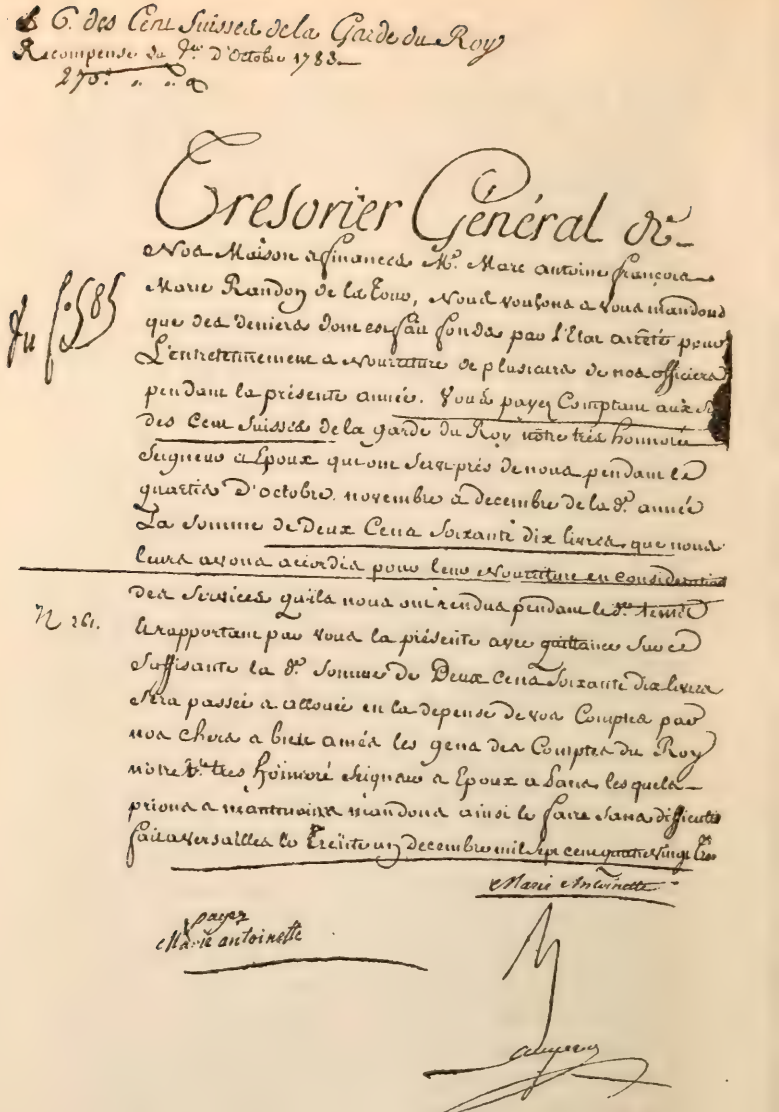
A.L.S. OF ADMIRAL BRUEYS, THE FRENCH ADMIRAL COMMANDING-IN-CHIEF, WHO WAS KILLED AT TRAFALGAR, DATED MAY 25, 1797.

Napoleonic periods are often distinguished by engraved vignettes of great artistic beauty. The designs of the earlier ones are often classical. The

letters of naval officers are often headed by a medallion on which a Roman galley figures conspicuously. It was by carefully studying the sale catalogues that I obtained the letter of Talleyrand to Napoleon at an outlay of 27 francs. For 52 francs I purchased in the open market one of the earliest official letters of Villeneuve to the Minister of Marine at Paris, after the battle of the Nile.

Some of the autographs of the Revolution fetch very high prices. Letters of Mirabeau are comparatively cheap, but those of the Robespierres and Anacharsis Cloots command almost as much as those of Montesquieu. Letters of Madame Roland and Marat are also much in request. Autographs of Charlotte Corday are probably more valuable than those of Marie Antoinette.

In the early part of the nineteenth century MSS. of every description were sold at prices which now seem incredible. Miss Berry tells us that the "Deffand collection of letters and documents consisting of 1 folio of *œuvres de* Boufflers; 1 do. of letters from different persons; 2 do. of letters from Voltaire to Madame de Deffand; 1 do. Journal of do.; 1 do. *divers ouvrages* of do.; 5 large bundles of manuscript papers; 1 packet containing several hundred letters from Voltaire, Rousseau, Delille, Montesquieu, de Staël, Walpole, Henault, and 7 *large packets* containing 800 letters from Madame de Deffand to Horace Walpole were sold in one lot to Dyce Sombre for £157." Lucky Nabob! I may say without indiscretion that the single letter from Napoleon to Talleyrand mentioned at the opening of this chapter obtained a better price. Letters of Voltaire are worth from £1 to £5 each. I gave 10 francs for the apothecary's account for the



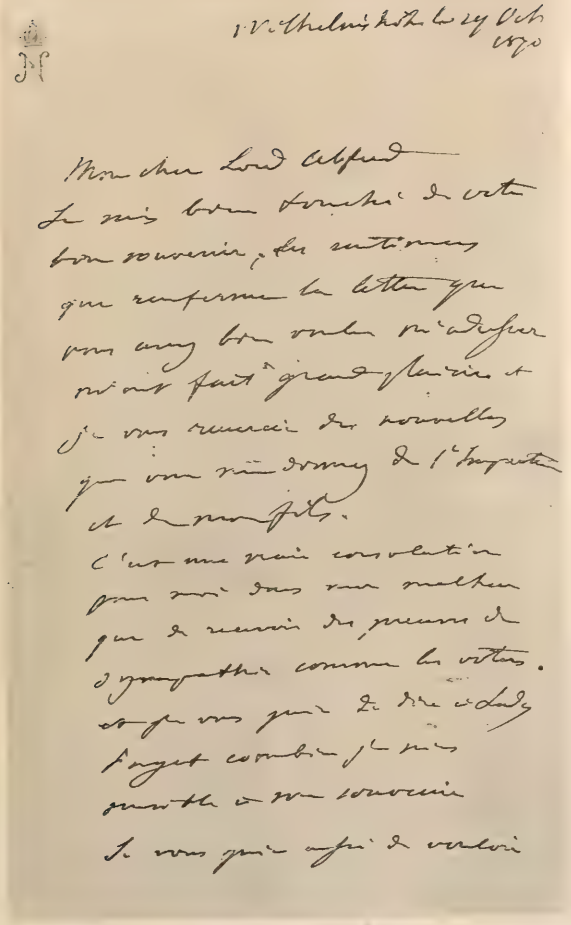
6. des Cent Suisses de la Garde du Roy
Recompense du 1er d'Octobre 1783
270. " " 0

Tresorier Général de
Nos Maison et finances Mr. Marc antoine françois
Marie Randon de la Tour, Nous voulons et vous mandons
que des deniers dont est fait fonds par l'Etat arrêté pour
L'entretenement et Nourriture de plusieurs de nos officiers
pendant la présente année. Vous payez Comptant aux Sr.
des Cent Suisses de la garde du Roy nôtre très honnoré
Seigneur et Epoux qui ont servi près de nous pendant le
quartier d'octobre, novembre et decembre de la dte. année
La Somme de Deux Cens Soixante dix livres, que nous
leurs avons accordés pour leur Nourriture en considération
des Services qu'ils nous ont rendus pendant le dt. temps
N 261. Et rapportant par vous la présente avec quittance sur ce
Suffisante la dte. Somme de Deux Cens Soixante dix livres
sera passée et allouée en la depense de vos Comptes par
nos chers et bien amés les gens des Comptes du Roy
nôtre dt. tres honnoré Seigneur et Epoux a Paris, lesquels
prions et maintenant mandons ainsi le faire sans difficulté
fait a Versailles le treinte un decembre mil sept cent quatre vingt trois

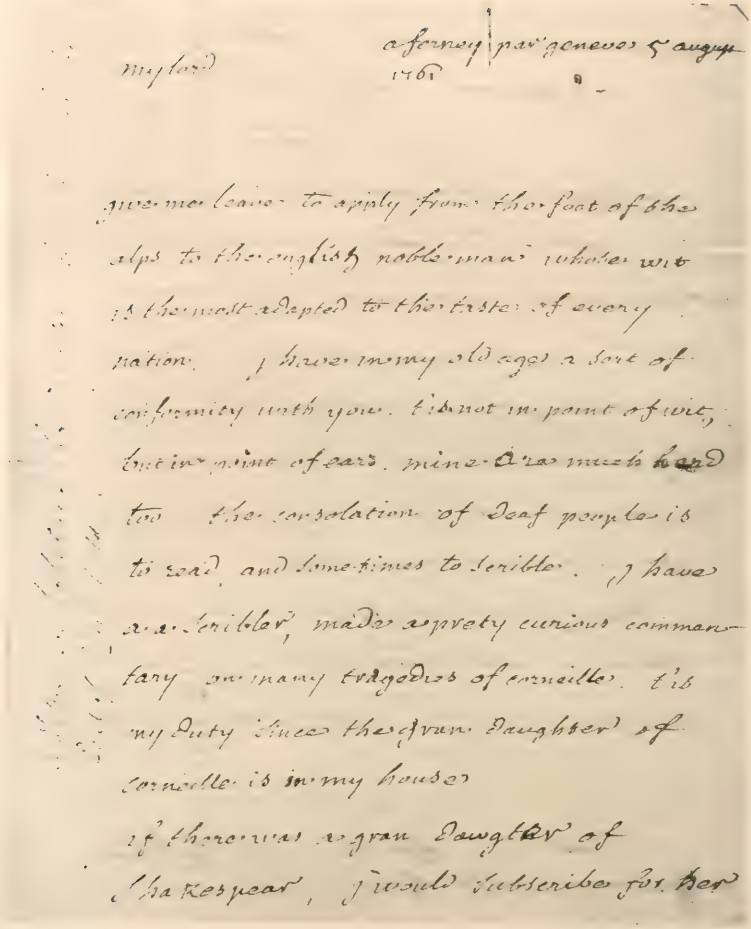
Marie Antoinette

payez
Marie antoinette

TWO SIGNATURES OF MARIE ANTOINETTE ON A WARRANT, OCTOBER, 1783.



A.L.S. OF NAPOLEON III. TO LORD ALFRED PAGET FROM WILHELMSHOHE, OCTOBER 20, 1870.



FIRST PAGE OF LETTER IN ENGLISH FROM VOLTAIRE TO EARL OF CHESTERFIELD, FERNEY, AUGUST 5, 1761.

embalming of his body prior to its inhumation in the Pantheon. The following letter in English from Voltaire to Lord Chesterfield — certainly a rarity—cost me £3 3s.:—

Voltaire to the Earl of Chesterfield.

À FERNEY PAR GENEVE,
5 *August* 1761.

MY LORD,—give me leave to apply from the foot of the Alps to the english nobleman whose wit is the most adapted to the taste of every nation. j have in my old age a sort of conformity with you. tis not in point of wit, but in point of ears. mine are much hard too. the consolation of deaf people is to read, and sometimes to scribble. j have as a scribbler, made a prety curious commentary on many tragedies of corneille. t'is my duty since the gran daughter of corneille is in my house.

if there was a gran daughter of Shakespear j would subscribe for her. j hope those who take ponticheré will take subscriptions too. the work is prodigeously cheap and no money is to be given but at the reception of the book

nurse receives the names of the subscribers. y^r^ name will be the most honourable and the dearest to me.

I wish y^r^ lordship long life, good eyes and good stomak.

my lord *souvenez vous de votre ancien serviteur Voltaire qui vous est attaché comme s'il etait a londres.*

. . . . .

The original spelling of the letter has been preserved.

It is needless to discuss the value of such priceless treasures as the autographs of Rabelais and Molière, the subjects of so much discussion and (if truth be told) so much deception. Like the signatures of Shakespeare, they may be described as the Koh-i-noors of calligraphy. They do not come within the domain of practical autograph collecting.

XI

A CENTURY OF AMERICAN AUTOGRAPH COLLECTING

CHAPTER XI

A CENTURY OF AMERICAN AUTOGRAPH COLLECTING

The great collectors and collections of the United States —The autograph sale-rooms of New York, Boston, and Philadelphia

"How very inconsiderate some of our great people have been in the matter of epistolary correspondence! If Thomas Lynch, jun., and Button Gwinnett, and John Morton had only understood the feelings of a collector, they would surely have favoured their friends more frequently with an A.L.S. or even an A.N.S. When they were signing the Declaration on that warm July afternoon, and committing themselves to the famous fallacy that 'all men are created equal,' they might have foreseen the day when every American collector would begin his colligendering career by gathering 'signers.'"—ADRIAN H. JOLINE.

IF the conscript fathers of autograph collecting can be fairly claimed by the country of their birth, the majority of their most ardent and enthusiastic successors are to be found to-day on the other side of the Atlantic. It is in New York, Boston, Baltimore, Philadelphia, San Francisco, St. Louis, Savannah, and elsewhere that one must now look for many of the choicest and most priceless literary MSS. in existence, and it is obvious that the New World has in a measure become the guardian of many of the traditions and treasures of the Old. Before me lie

the calendar of the Emmet collection of papers relating to American history, presented some ten years ago to the New York Public Library, which fills no less than 563 closely printed pages; next to it is the catalogue, in three parts, of the Louis J. Haber collection, sold in December, 1909, by the Anderson Auction Company of New York, the successors of the historic firm of Bangs; the monograph, "Privately Illustrated Books," by Daniel M. Tredwell, of New York—the largest and most carefully written book on the subject yet produced in America (475 pages, handsomely printed in De Vinne's best style), the exhaustive catalogue of that treasure-house of Southern history, beneath the laurel and jasmines of historic "Wormsloe," Georgia, recently sent me by Wimberley J. De Renne; the already often-referred-to "Meditations" of Mr. Adrian H. Joline; the standard American book, 'Autographic Collections of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution," by the late Lyman C. Draper, LL.D., the interesting MSS. so carefully arranged by Chas. De F. Burns, of New York, whose knowledge of early American collecting is very great; and, last but not least, a pile of valuable notes and statistics from the pen of my excellent friend Mr. Telamon Cuyler, without whose aid the present chapter could never have been written. My initial difficulty is a plethora of interesting information. I must not even attempt to summarise the autographic trophies to be found in such famous libraries as those of Mr. Pierpont Morgan, Dr. Thomas Addis Emmet (at the present moment the Nestor of the world's great collectors of MSS.), Mr. W. J. De Renne of Wormsloe, or Mr. W. H. Bexby of St. Louis.

Dr. Emmet, now the most vigorous octogenarian in New York, and divided only by a single generation from the Irish patriot of 1804 (his uncle), forms a living link between the days of Israel K. Tefft of Savannah, the pioneer of American autograph collecting, whose library was sold half a century ago in Philadelphia, and men like Mr. Louis J. Haber, Mr. Bexby, and Mr. Telamon Cuyler himself; for is not my enthusiastic *confrère* himself the proud possessor of a holograph document containing seven times the name of Button Gwinnett? To nine-tenths of my lay readers the mention of B. Gwinnett, who was killed in a duel in May, 1777, and T. Lynch, drowned at sea in the same fateful year, will probably have no particular signification. Let me tell them that if they could discover a fine autograph letter, duly signed, of either of these signers of the Declaration of American Independence, they may consider themselves provided for for life, and far richer than the owners of red and blue "Post Office Mauritius," "Hawaian blues," or other priceless *rariora* dear to the votaries of philately!

The great majority of American autograph collectors apparently utilise their letters and documents for the purposes of extra-illustration, or the creation of "association-books."[1] Although the arrangement of autographs on these lines does not receive the whole-hearted sanction of Mr. Joline, Dr. Emmet has successfully demonstrated the supreme importance of this source of illustration to the "grangeriser," and it is constantly practised by both Mr. Cuyler and myself. In this connection I do not, of course, allude to the MSS. of famous authors, which should obviously be kept apart, and bound by

[1] See my article in *The Country Home*, March, 1910.

experts like Mr. Cedric Chivers, in such a way as not to interfere with their original condition or appearance, but to isolated letters or documents. I fail to imagine anything more interesting or attractive than a copy of Clarendon's "History," illustrated not only by portraits and views, but by MSS. like those in the possession of Mr. Sabin, or those I shall describe when giving some account of the sales of the last decade.[1] Then, and then only, do you seem to actually live again in the veritable atmosphere of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The American collector generally begins his career, both as an autograph collector and extra-illustrator, by dealing with such works as Sanderson's "Lives of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence" and Lossing's "Field-book of the Revolution" (1776–1783). The Emmet Collection in the New York Public Library,[2] which numbers 10,800 documents, is classified under such heads as the Albany Congress of 1754, the Stamp-Act Congress of 1765, the Continental Congress of 1774, the members of the Continental Congress, 1774–1789, Presidents of Congress, Presidents of the United States, the Signers of the Declaration of Independence, and so forth.

The cult of the Signers is one of the most distinctive features of American autograph collecting.[3]

[1] See *post*, Chapter XII.

[2] Since 1896 Dr. T. A. Emmet has formed a second collection of little less importance than the one now alluded to.

[3] Mr. T. Cuyler hopes some day to publish a "Visitation of the Signers" which will comprise a complete transcript of all the principal letters and documents collected under this head. The value and interest of such a work will be of manifold importance. He has already made a beginning.

The late Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, is credited with having got together a complete series, and I have heard the subject attracted the sympathetic interest of Queen Victoria. While the Rev. Dr. Wm. B. Sprague (born at Andover, Conn., U.S.A.) was the first man to form the first unbroken set of the immortal fifty-six "Signers," Dr. Raffles' set was the second to be completed. This fact is shown in a letter of June, 1835, by Benjamin B. Thatcher (born at Warren, Me., 1809; died Boston, Mass., 1840), the earliest writer on American autograph collections. Some of the signatures of the "Signers" are common enough, but those of Button Gwinnett and Lynch, both of which I am able, thanks to the kindness of Mr. Cuyler, to illustrate, are of quite phenomenal rarity. Gwinnett and Lynch both died tragically "before their time," and this may possibly account for the scarceness of their handwriting. Some collectors spend their lives in the perpetual quest of these unfindable autographs.

Mr. Cuyler has sent me several anecdotes on the subject of these Gwinnett and Lynch signatures. He informs me that the earliest American collector, Israel K. Tefft, was called from Savannah to the estate of a gentleman resident near that city. Having to wait, he wandered on the lawn, under the cypress and the jasmine, and, perceiving a scrap of paper blowing about, he carelessly picked it up. To his joyous astonishment he found that it was a draft on the Treasury of Georgia, dated 1777, ordering certain payments, and signed by Button Gwinnett! Though Mr. Tefft was the first autograph collector in America, and had begun operations as early as 1815-20, in Savannah, he had, until that tour, never even seen the signature of Button Gwinnett—other than

that appearing upon facsimiles of the Declaration of Independence. After transacting his business, he exhibited his find to his client, and said that he would gladly take the paper in place of money for his services. The gentleman generously presented him with the paper and also paid him. (This signature of B. G. is now preserved in the "Set of Signers" in the State Library at Albany, New York, U.S.A.)

Mr. Cuyler has ascertained that there are only twenty-two known signatures of Button Gwinnett extant. These include his holograph will, drawn up a few hours before his fatal duel with Gen. McIntosh (May, 1777), which is now in the collection of Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan, of New York. No A.L.S. of Gwinnett is known. The State of Georgia, in which he was Master of Pilotage, Justice of the Peace, Member of the Provincial Assembly, Member of Council of Safety, and Governor, possesses not a line of his writing. One L.S. is in the *private* collection of Thos. Addis Emmet, M.D., of New York.

I have previously alluded to the holograph document, with his name repeated seven times, in possession of Mr. Cuyler. The A.L.S. of Thomas Lynch, jun., "Signer for South Carolina" (now published), came from the Washington correspondence.[1] It was ultimately sold for £1,400 (*i.e.*, £370 more than the record Nelson letter), and is the only one in existence. It now figures in Dr. Emmet's best set of "Signers" in the New York Public Library. In this set fifty-five out of the fifty-six signers of the American Magna Charta are represented by signed holograph letters. Dr. Emmet regards the acquisition of a letter signed by Gwinnett as the crowning triumph of his sixty years' work in the fields of auto-

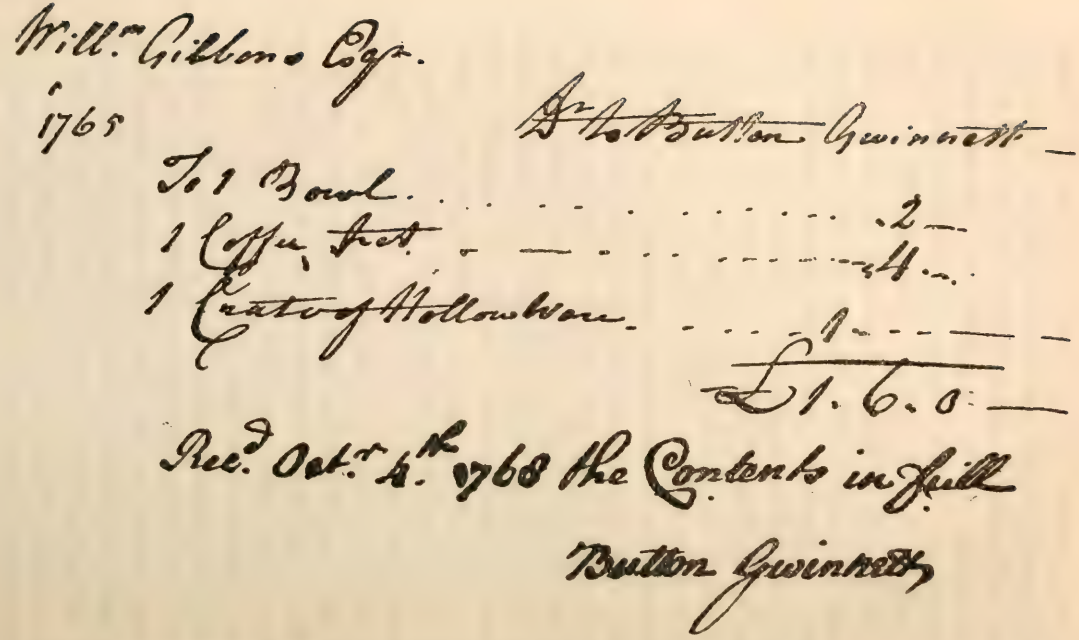
[1] See *post*, p. 328.

graph collecting. If a holograph letter of Gwinnett could be discovered, *and such a letter may very likely exist in England*, it would probably fetch £5,000.

Gwinnett was an Englishman, a descendant of Admiral Sir Thomas Button (who entered our navy in 1589, explored Hudson's Bay, and died in 1634), migrated early in life to Charleston, South Carolina, finally settling in Georgia, where he accumulated wealth. After his tragic death, his widow and only child, a daughter, returned to England. The daughter married but died childless.

In the list of American collectors Dr. Sprague comes next to Mr. Tefft. George Washington at his death left his correspondence neatly arranged and filed. His widow, however, burned the whole of the letters she had ever received from the first President of the United States! This is almost the greatest known destruction of valuable autograph matter. From his first love-letter, penned in Virginia, to the young Widow Custis, his correspondence during the fatal Braddock campaign, his homely domestic instructions to the *châtelaine* of Mount Vernon, to his war letters, in which he opened his heart and there recorded the true history of the American War, she had preserved all, which now went into the fire and £100,000 on to-day's valuation, and priceless American historical data, went up in smoke!

By the unwise permission of the Washington family, Dr. Sprague was permitted to abstract "as many letters as he liked" from the wonderfully accurate letter-files of George Washington, preserved at his home, "Mount Vernon," in Virginia. Dr. S. there got some of his best papers, being only requested to "leave copies of all letters he took"! Among the papers he thus acquired was the



Willm. Gibbons Esqr.

1765

Dr. to Button Gwinnett

To 1 Bowl 2

1 Coffee Pot 4

1 Crate of Hollow Ware 1

£1. 6. 0

Recd. Octr. 4th 1768 the Contents in full

Button Gwinnett

THE SIGNATURE AND WRITING OF BUTTON GWINNETT, THE RAREST AUTOGRAPH OF THE "SIGNERS."

A.L.S. of Thomas Lynch, jun., "Signer" for South Carolina.

The following is the text of this wonderful autograph, a portion of which is reproduced in facsimile :—

Sir,—'Though the acquaintance I have with your Excellency be but slight, I am induced to hope that you will readily excuse the trouble I am going to give you, when you shall become acquainted with the merits of the Gentleman, in whose favour that trouble is given.

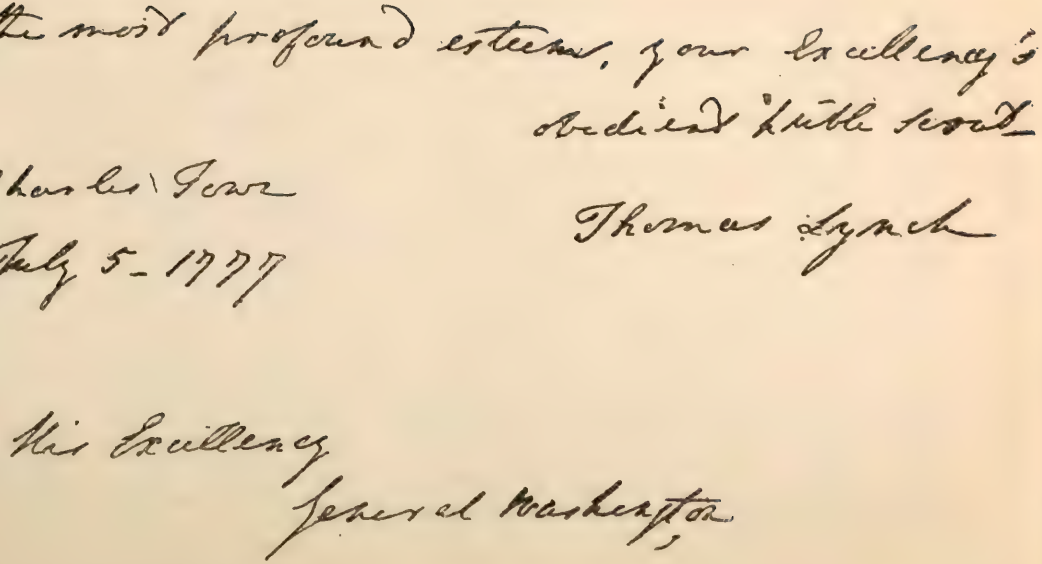
Coll : Pinckney, the Bearer of this Letter, now Commands the first Regiment raised in this State for the Continental Service. At the commencement of the present War, he entered into the Service with the rank of Captain, and has since, to the satisfaction of every real friend of American liberty in this State, been advanced by various promotions to that of Coll. His family being as respectable as any amongst us, and his fortune abundantly competent, nothing but a passion for glory and a zeal for the cause of his Cóuntry, could have led him into this measure. I shall say nothing of his Abilities, convinced as I am that your Excellency's penetration and the frequent opportunities he cannot fail to have, will soon discover them, but as to Principles, I will be bold to say, that no Man living has a higher Spirit, a nicer sense of Honour, or a more incorruptable Heart, than he has. Such a man cannot but be highly acceptable to one in your Excellency's situation, & I will willingly engage my life that the friend I now venture to recommend to your favour is such an one— I fervently pray God to watch over your Excelly's life, & to make you as happy and successful as you are good and brave. I have the honour to be with the most sincere regard and most profound esteem, your Excellency's

most obedient hu^ble ser^vt

Thomas Lynch

Charles Town,
July 5 1777
His Excellency General Washington.[1]

[1] The original is now in the Emmet Collection, New York Public Library.



THE LAST PAGE OF THE LETTER OF THOMAS LYNCH, JUN., ONE OF THE AMERICAN "SIGNERS," WHICH FETCHED 7,000 DOLLARS.

Letters of George Washington often find their way into the English sale-rooms. During the first decade of the present century they have varied in price from £6 to £60. Mr. Cuyler enables me to give my readers not only one of the finest letters of Washington's in existence, but one hitherto unpublished. I need not point out either its characteristic style or historic value, but will only observe that Lund Washington, his cousin and manager of his Virginia estates, possessed his confidence before any other person, excepting perhaps Mrs. Washington.

CAMP AT CAMBRIDGE *Augt 20th* 1775

DEAR LUND,—Your Letter by Captn Prince came to my hands last night—I was glad to learn by it that all are well.—the acct given of the behaviour of the Scotchmen at Port Tobacco & Piscataway surpriz'd & vexed me—Why did they Imbark in the Cause?—What do they say for themselves?—What does other say of them?—are they admitted into company?—or kicked out of it?—What does their Countrymen urge in justification of them?—they are fertile in invention, and will offer excuses where excuses can be made. I cannot say but I am curious to learn the reasons why men, who had subscribed, and bound themselves to each other, and their Country, to stand forth in defence of it, should lay down their Arms the first moment they were called upon

Although I never hear of the Mill under the direction of Simpson, without a degree of warmth & vexation at his extreame stupidity, yet, if you can spare money from other purposes, I could wish to have it sent to him, that it may, if possible, be set a going before the works get ruined & spoilt, & my whole Money perhaps totally lost.—If I am really to loose Barran's debt to me, it will be a pretty severe stroke upon the back of Adams, & the expense I am led into by that confounded fellow Simpson, and necessarily so—in seating my Lands under the management of Cleveland.—

Spinning should go forward with all possible dispatch, as we shall have nothing else to depend upon if these

disputes continue another year.—I can hardly think that Lord Dunmore can act so low, and unmanly a part, as think of seizing Mrs. Washington by way of revenge upon me; howevr as I suppose she is, before this time gone over to Mr Calverts, & will soon after retug, go down to New Kent, she will be out of his reach for 2 or 3 months to come, in which time matters may, and probably will, take such a turn as to render her removal either absolutely necessary, or quite useless.—I am nevertheless exceedingly thankful to the Gentlemen of Alexandria for their friendly attention to this point and desire you will if there is any sort of reason to suspect a thing of this kind provide a Kitchen for her in Alexandria, or some other place of safety elsewhere for her and my Papers.

The People of this Government have obtained a character which they by no means deserved—their officers generally speaking are the most indyferent kind of People I ever saw.—I have already broke one Col. and five Captains for Cowardice, and for drawing more Pay and Provisions than they had men in their Companies there is two more Cols now under arrest, and to be tried for the same offences —in short they are by no means such Troops, in any respect as you are led to believe of them from the accts which are published, but I need not make myself Enemies among them, by this declaration although it is consistant with truth.—I daresay the men would fight very well (if properly officered) although they are an exceeding dirty & hasty people.—had they been properly conducted at Bunkers Hill (on the 17th of June) or those that were there properly supported, the Regulars would have met with a shameful defeat, & a much more considerable loss than they did, which is now known to be exactly 1057 killed & wounded —it was for their behaviour on that occasion that the above officers were broke, for I never spared one that was accused of Cowardice but brot'em to immediate Tryal.

Our Lines of Defence are now compleated, as near so at least as can be—we men wish them to come out as soon as they please, but they (that is the enemy) discover no Inclination to quit their own Works of Defence, & as it is almost impossible for us to get to them, we do nothing but watch each others motions all day at the distance of about a mile, every now and then picking off

a stragler when we can catch them without their Intrenchments, in return they often attempt to Cannonad our Lines to no other purpose than the waste of a considerable quantity of powder to themselves which we should be very glad to get.—

What does Doctr Craik say to the behaviour of his Countrymen, & Townspeople? Remember me kindly to him & tell him that I should be very glad to see him here if there was any thing worth his acceptance, but the Massachusets People suffer nothing to go by them that they can lay hands upon.—

I wish the money could be had from Hill & the Bills of Exchange (except Col Fairfax's, which ought to be sent to him immediately) turned into Cash, you might then, I should think, be able to furnish Simpson with about £300, but you are to recollect that I have got Cleveland & the hired People with him to pay also.—I would not have you buy a single bushel of wheat till you can see with some kind of certainty what Market the Flour is to go to—& if you cannot find sufficient employment in repairing the Mill works, and other things of this kind for Mr. Robets and Thomas Alferd, they must be closely employed in making Cask or working at the Carpenters or other business otherwise they must be discharged for it is not reasonable, as all Mill business will probably be at an end for a while, that I am to pay them £100 a year to be Idle.—I should think Roberts himself must see, & be sensible of the reasonableness of this request, as I believe few Millers will find employment if our Ports are shut up, & the wheat kept in the straw, or otherwise for greater security.

I will write to Mr. Milnor to forward you a good Country Boulting Cloth for Simpson which endeavour to have contrived to him by the first safe conveyance.—I wish you would quicken Lasphire & Sears about the Dining Room Chimney Piece (to be executed as mentioned in one of my last letters) as I could wish to have that end of the house compleatly finished before I return.—I wish you had done the end of the New Kitchen next the garden as also the old Kitchen with Rusticated Board, however as it is not I would have the corners done so in the manner of our New Church (those two especially which Fronts the Quarter.—What have you done with the Well? Is that walled up?—have you any accts of the Painter? how does he behave at Fredericksburg?—

I much approve of your sowing wheat in clean ground, although you should be late in doing it, and if for no other purpose than a tryal.—It is a growing I find, as well as a new practice, that of Overseers keeping Horses, & for what purpose, unless it be to make fat Horses at my expense, I know not as it is no saving of my own Horses. I do not like the custom, & wish you would break it, but do as you will, as I cannot pretend to interfere at this distance.

Remember me kindly to all the neighbours who enquire after

yr affecte friend and servt
G. WASHINGTON

Letters of Franklin are less valuable than those of Washington. The letter reproduced was purchased by me in Paris for £10. It of course derives additional value from being addressed to Washington. The seal is intact.

PASSY, NEAR PARIS, *March* 2. 1778.

DEAR SIR,—M. de Fontevieux, who hopes to have the honour of delivering this into your hands, is a young Gentleman of a considerable Family, and of excellent character, who goes over with Views of improving himself in the military Art under your Auspices. He is willing to serve as Volunteer, in any Capacity for which your Excell^{y} shall find him qualified. He is warmly recommended to me by Persons of great Distinction here, who are zealous Friends to the American Cause. And I beg leave to recommend him earnestly to your Excellency's Protection, being confident that he will endeavour to merit it. With the greatest Esteem & Respect I have the Honour to be,

Your Excellency's
most obedient and most humble Servant
B. FRANKLIN

To his Excellency George Washington Esqre General & Commander in chief of the American Armies, Philadelphia.

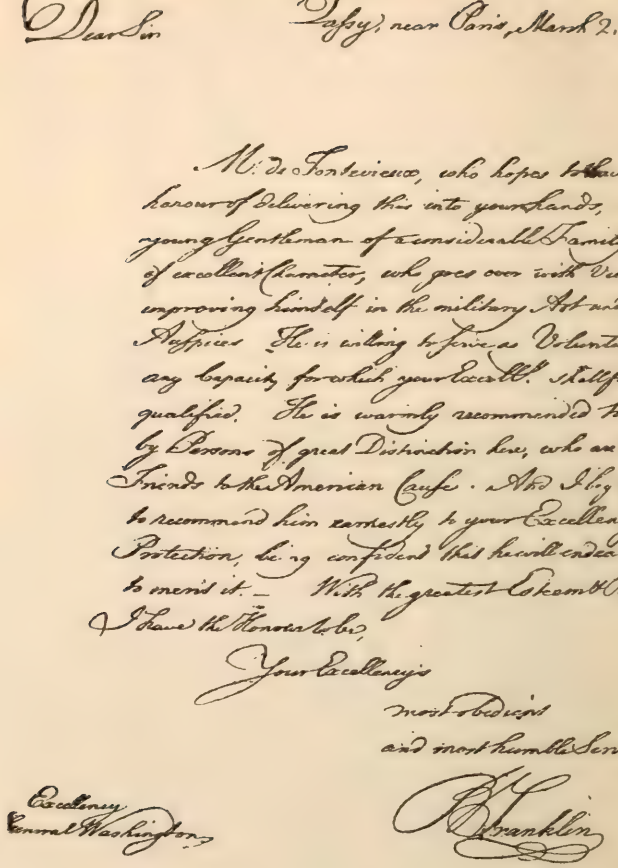
The names of Lyman Draper, G. W. Childs Kennedy, Proctor, Fogg, Dreer, C. C. Jones, jun.,

overseers keeping Horses, & for what purpose, unless
it be to make fat Horses at my expence, I know not,
as it is no saving of my own Horses — I do not like
the custom, & wish you would break it — but do as
you wish, as I cannot pretend to interfere at this
distance. —

Remember me kindly to all the Neighbours
who enquire after. Yr. Affect. Friend & Servt.

G. Washington

THE LAST PAGE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON'S SPLENDID A.L.S., NOW PUBLISHED THROUGH THE KINDNESS OF MR. T. C. S. CUYLER.


Dear Sir

Passy, near Paris, March 2. 1778.

M. de Fontevieux, who hopes to have the honour of delivering this into your hands, is a young Gentleman of considerable Family, and of excellent character, who goes over with Views of improving himself in the military Art under your Auspices. He is willing to serve as Volunteer, in any Capacity for which your Excell.y shall find him qualified. He is warmly recommended to me by Persons of great Distinction here, who are zealous Friends to the American Cause. And I beg leave to recommend him earnestly to your Excellency's Protection, being confident that he will endeavour to merit it. — With the greatest Esteem & Respect I have the Honour to be

Your Excellency's

most obedient

and most humble Servant

B Franklin

Excellency

General Washington

A.L.S. OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO GEORGE WASHINGTON
MARCH 2, 1778.

W. J. De Renne, and Elliot Danforth, are, like those of Emmet, J. Pierpont Morgan, and Joline, familiar to all American autograph collectors. I find in *The Archivist* (1894) many interesting details of the wonderful collection of Mr. George Washington Childs, publisher and proprietor of the *Philadelphia Ledger*. Mr. Childs acquired amongst other *rariora*, the MSS. of Byron's "Bride of Abydos," Thackeray's "Lecture on the Four Georges," and Scott's "Chronicles of Canongate." He possessed a MS. parody by Byron on Wordsworth's "Peter Bell," which began with the somewhat prosaic lines:—

> There's something in a flying horse
> And something in a huge balloon.

Byron wrote:—

> There's something in a stupid ass,
> And something in a heavy dunce;
> But never since I went to school
> I heard or saw so d——d a fool
> As William Wordsworth is for once.

Amongst the autographs greatly sought after in America is that of the ill-fated Major André. One of the gems of Mr. Childs's collection is described as a holograph poem by the unlucky soldier, entitled the "Cow Chase," and dated July 21, 1780. Its closing stanza runs:—

> And now I've closed my epic strain
> I tremble as I show it,
> Lest this same warrior-drover Wayne
> Should ever catch the poet.

André was soon after captured and executed. To

the concluding verse some unkind and unknown hand has added the lines—

> And when the epic strain was sung
> The poet by the neck was hung,
> And to his cost he finds too late
> The "dung born tribe" decides his fate.[1]

Mr. Cuyler sends me some interesting information on the subject of André from the collector's point of view. It appears that André was twice captured during the American War. Upon the first occasion he was hastily searched, and though he lost his watch, arms, sword, and purse, he managed to save the framed miniature of his beloved Honora Sneyd by concealing it in his mouth! The occasion of his second capture was on that fatal ride along the east bank of the Hudson River, after his interview with Benedict Arnold. At this time the whole of André's papers, both official and personal, were in New York. Upon the evacuation of New York, 1783, some one took his papers to Halifax, Nova Scotia. Seventy-five years later a friend of Dr. Emmet called on a gentleman resident there. Receiving no response to his ring, he walked through the house, and as he entered the kitchen he found his friend kicking the last of a heap of musty, faded papers into the fire, on an open hearth. Leaping over several great oaken chests, the visitor saved seven or eight documents, several already scorched, from the flames. The gentleman of Halifax explained that he needed the chests, which his grandfather had deposited in their garret, and so burned the papers.

[1] André's journals are now in the magnificent collection of Mr. Bexby, of St. Louis.

Those saved were autograph documents of André—and the New Yorker gave them to Dr. Emmet, in whose collection they now are. André's writings in America are exceedingly scarce.

André was an artist, and executed several drawings of his friends, among whom were portraits of Abraham Cuyler and his wife, which are now preserved in that family. This man was the last Royal Mayor of Albany, New York, and the father of General Sir Cornelius Cuyler, whose sons fought in the Guards defending Hougomont at Waterloo.

As in France and England, there has been much wanton destruction of MSS. in the United States, on which subjects Mr. Joline speaks feelingly. Mr. T. Cuyler tells me that after the crushing defeat of the Federals by the Confederate Army at Bull Run (First Manassas), Virginia, in 1861, the former fled in wildest disorder to Washington City, where they rallied. The consequent confusion, the urgent demands for food and lodgings for a large force of men, caused improvised bakeries to be established in the lower story of the National Capitol. A lady, in passing through a corridor, observed an officer urging his men to roll away into an adjacent marsh great barrels, dusty and stained with age, out of which protruded ancient papers. She paused, and thinking of Dr. Emmet's collection, she begged leave to fill her pockets with documents. Those which she so saved were found to be priceless—being correspondence of 1776–1783, and among her finds was a long letter from Benjamin Franklin, dated at Passy, France, during the American Revolutionary War. Later inquiries disclosed the fact that, after the British victory at Bladensburg, Maryland, the secretaries of the

Federal Government had hastily packed these archives in barrels and carried them to safety before the British forces had taken Washington City, in the "War of 1812." Upon their return, these precious papers had been left in the Capitol until ruthlessly tossed out in 1861.

One of the most striking features in American autograph collecting, important and extensive as it is to-day, is the smallness of its beginnings. Tefft, the originator of the autograph cult, who commenced operations by securing a few signatures in the year of Waterloo, was only a bank-cashier; Dr. Sprague was a clerical tutor in the Washington family, and pure accident put unique opportunities in his way; Ferdinand J. Dreer was a merchant who took up the hobby when his health gave way, and lived to complete a collection second only in importance to that formed by Dr. Emmet. It was Dreer who, at the expense of £200, recovered Washington's last letter, after it had remained for nearly a century in Sweden. Charles C. Jones, jun., of Augusta, Georgia, was the first to set the fashion of looking for letters connected with the Civil War of 1861–65. The era of autograph sales began in 1810, at Charleston, South Carolina, by the dispersal of the collection of MSS. formed by a French Consul, but the first autograph sale catalogue is nearly a quarter of a century later, and includes the papers of Aaron Burr, at one time Vice-President of the United States. It was not, however, till the "eighteen-fifties" that dealing in autographs came to rank as a business.

As regards the prospects of this popular pursuit in the United States, Mr. Telamon Cuyler writes as follows:—

"The future of American autograph collecting seems to be directed to the illustration of the beginnings of our industrial and financial life rather than to the forming or attempting to form what would only result in being very inferior sets of 'Signers,' generals, governors, &c. The beginnings of newspaper life, of iron manufacturing, of cotton milling, of cotton culture, of the steamboat business, of maritime life along the Atlantic seaboard, and such efforts with special attention to great inventions, such as the telephone, telegraph, typewriter, electric light, automobile, flying machines, and many hundreds of smaller discoveries. The gathering of documents connected with the foundations of great industries, such as the steel business, is now being carried forward by collectors of great wealth who have drawn their immense fortunes from the source which they endeavour to retrace to its petty beginning. You can readily understand how perfectly natural such a form of collecting appears when you view it in the light of our national development and our national character. I myself have taken up certain lines of collecting in this field and which I find of the greatest interest."

Mr. C. E. Goodspeed, of 5A, Park Street, Boston, who, like Mr. Benjamin of New York, issues frequently very useful sale catalogues of autograph letters, also writes me :—

"I think the most interesting autograph which I have ever had was a one-page quarto letter from Martha Washington to Mrs. John Adams, the wife of the second President of the U.S., in answer to Mrs. Adams' letter of condolence on the death of her husband (President Washington). That letter sold for $300.00, but would bring perhaps twice that to-day. The most interesting historical document, perhaps, which I have had was a letter from Governor Hutchinson to the Committee of the town of Boston in answer to the demand of the Committee for the removal of the troops. This was written the day after the famous Boston Massacre of March 5, 1770. I have had a great many Washington letters, but never any of great historical importance. An interesting note might be made of those aggravating incidents where

autographs are brought in by parties who wish to find their value, but who would not sell them. Amongst items of this class I may mention, having been brought in quite recently, Benjamin Franklin's famous epitaph for his own tombstone, written in his own autograph; it is found in all the "Lives of Franklin"; an autograph album containing about a dozen letters from Byron to Lady Blessington; a letter from Byron to his wife, written after their separation, but never sent, as Lady Blessington advised against it and retained the letter; also in the same album three or four letters from Dickens to Lady Blessington; two charming Thackeray letters followed with pretty pen-and-ink sketches; an autograph poem of Thackeray's; two autograph poems, each of Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning; and poems of Landor, and others! Was not that a nice little collection, and was it not an aggravation not to be able to even make an offer on it?"

The President of the Anderson Auction Company (12, East 46th Street, New York) has most obligingly sent me a priced catalogue of the Haber Sale, already more than once mentioned in these pages.

Mr. L. J. Haber has also given me the price at which the letters sold were originally acquired. If the reader bears in mind that five dollars represent a pound he will easily be able to judge not only the prices which now rule in the autograph market of New York, but the rise in them which has taken place in the past ten or twenty years. No list of this kind has ever before appeared :—

From Parts I. and II.

Lot No.		Cost. $	Sale Price. $
9	Aldrich	7.50	32.00
90	Presidents...	415.00	930.00
312	Browning (E. B.)... ...	27.50	100.00
315	„ „	20.00	37.00
326	Bryant (W. C.)	9.00	13.00

Lot No.		Cost. $	Sale Price. $
355	Burroughs (John)... ...	7.50	46.00
409	Mark Twain	15.00	150.00
410	„ „	5.00	100.00
422	Coleridge	12.00	29.00
431	Cooper	13.00	85.00
478	De Quincey	10.00	34.00
486	Dickens	12.50	53.00
553	Emerson	18.00	115.00
768	Hardy (T.)	5.00	36.00
774	Harris (Joel C.)	10.00	53.00
775	Harte (Bret)	24.00	161.00
784	Hawthorne [1]	16.00	75.00
825	Holmes	28.00	195.00
881	Irving	120.00	445.00
929	Keats	125.00	2,500.00

The above-mentioned autographs were either included in books or bound up separately. The following apparently were detached letters:—

PART III.

Lot. No.		Cost. $	Sale Price. $
1	Addison	20.00	42.00
30	Jane Austen	20.00	60.00
42	Beecher (H. W.)	2.00	21.00
45	Blackmore	2.50	8.50
47	Blake (Wm.)	15.00	55.00
44	„ „	1.00	8.50
51	John Bright	1.00	7.25
52	Brontë (C.)	15.00	25.00
46	John Brown	20.00	46.00
60	Browning (E. B.) ...	20.00	35.00
76	Burns	70.00	165.00
81	Byron	40.00	85.00
84	Carlyle	10.00	21.00
91	Chesterfield	12.00	17.00

[1] Cost is for letter only; sale price includes book.

Lot No.		Cost. $	Sale Price. $
114	Darwin	4.00	12.00
118	Dickens	18.00	35.00
127	Doyle (Richard)	10.00	21.00
144	Franklin	30.00	86.00
151	Gladstone	1.50	5.00
165	Hardy (Thomas)	1.50	9.75
170	Hawthorne	20.00	45.00
208	Johnson (Samuel)... ...	35.00	85.00
216	Kipling (R.)	4.00	17.00
229	Lewes	2.50	14.00
242	Macpherson (James) ...	2.50	9.50
246	Marryat (Capt.)	3.00	9.00
251	Meredith (Geo.)	5.00	15.50
262	Morris (Wm.)	9.00	21.00
274	Paine (Thos.)	10.00	25.00
288	Piozzi (Mme.)	12.00	43.00
290	Poe (E. A.)	28.00	96.00
292	Pope (A.)	40.00	145.00
293	Porter (Jane)	2.00	10.00
304	Reade (Chas.)	1.00	6.00
309	Richardson (Samuel) ...	15.00	29.00
315	Rossetti (D. G.)	4.00	16.50
325	Shelley	60.00	105.00
326	„	7.50	80.00
347	Stevenson (R. L.) ...	12.00	51.00
353	Swinburne (A.)	3.00	15.00
358	Tennyson (A.)	9.00	31.00
358	Thackeray (W. M.) ...	8.00	60.00
371	Walpole (H.)	10.00	24.00
377	Wesley (J.)	8.00	20.00

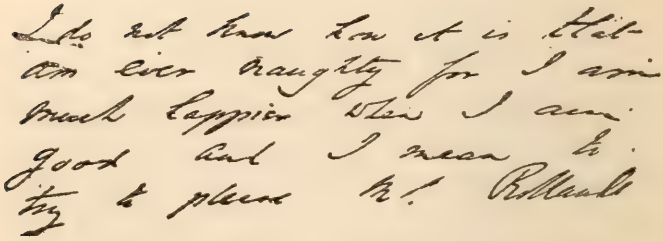
The majority of the Haber MSS. are of British origin. It gives me little opportunity of saying anything about the varying prices of the A.L.S. of American Presidents, or of the rise in value of the letters of Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses Grant. I note, however, that a letter of E. A. Poe has more than trebled in value since Mr. Haber acquired it.

Letters of Longfellow are still in demand, but those of O. W. Holmes are somewhat at a discount and were not largely represented in the Haber Sale, at which a fine specimen of Benjamin Jowett went for 4s. A 4-pp. letter of Mr. Thomas Hardy was sold for £1 19s., but a 1-p. 8vo of Rudyard Kipling brought £3 8s.! A verse by Mr. Andrew Lang, to which his signature was appended, went for £1 4s. It was entitled "The Optimism of an Undertaker," and ran:—

> Ah, why drag on unhappy days
> (This rede the undertaker says),
> Misguided race of men!
> Who handsomely interred might be
> By Mr. Silas Mould (that's me)
> For only three pound ten.

Twelve lines by Alexander Pope excited keen competition, and were sold eventually for £29. It is evident that, in spite of the set back of two years ago which brought a good many autographs back to England, the American market is still higher than any other, and there is every chance of its continuing so. On April 25, 1910, Mr. Frank Sabin paid £8,650 at Sotheby's for the voluminous correspondence, chiefly addressed to W. Blathwayt, Secretary of State and Commissioner for Trade and Plantations, relative to the American Colonies, during the last quarter of the seventeenth century. William Blathwayt (1649–1717) served his political apprenticeship under Sir W. Temple, subsequently filling the posts of Secretary at War (1683), Secretary of State to William III. during the campaign in Flanders, Commissioner for Trade and Plantations and Clerk of the Privy Council. Some years ago a parcel of

Blathwayt's own letters, which I used in extra-illustrating the "Account of William III.'s Achievements at the Siege of Namur," cost me 20s. Another interesting lot at the sale of April 25th consisted of thirteen MS. and thirty-five early printed maps. This went to Mr. Quaritch for £690—a price solely attributable to its unique American interest.



EARLY WRITING OF THE LATE KING EDWARD VII., CIRCA 1850.

(By permission of Messrs. Harper Bros.)

XII

THE PRICES OF AUTOGRAPHS AND THEIR VARIATIONS

CHAPTER XII

THE PRICES OF AUTOGRAPHS AND THEIR VARIATIONS

William Upcott and his contemporaries — Sale prices 1810–1910

Letters are the soul of trade.—JAMES HOWELL (1595–1666).

WILLIAM UPCOTT, the conscript father of modern autograph-collecting, was born in 1770, and lived until 1845. He was the natural son of the painter Ozias Humphry, the maiden-name of whose mother he assumed. His own mother was Dolly Wickens, the daughter of an Oxford tradesman. From his father he inherited a taste for antiques of every description, as well as a valuable collection of miniatures, pictures, and engravings. The life-story of Upcott is told with unusual detail in the "Dictionary of National Biography."[1] While acting as an assistant to the well-known booksellers, Evans of Pall Mall and Wright of Piccadilly, he attracted the attention of Dean Ireland and other *literati*. He was appointed Assistant-Secretary to Porson at the London Institution in 1806, and on his death continued to occupy the same post under

[1] Vol. LVIII. pp. 36–7.

Maltby. Mr. H. R. Tedder tells us that "every inch of the walls in his rooms, whether at the London Institution or in his subsequent residence, was covered with paintings, drawings, and prints, most of them by Gainsborough or Humphry, while all the drawers, shelves, boxes, and cupboards were crammed with his [autograph] collections." Upcott spent the evening of his useful life at 102, Upper Street, Islington, naming his house "Autograph Cottage." In 1836 he published privately a catalogue of his MSS. One of his greatest finds (and they may be counted by scores) was the discovery of the MS. of Chatterton's "Amphitryon" (now in the British Museum) in a cheesemonger's shop. He never married. There is a capital portrait of Upcott engraved in March, 1818, by T. Bragg, after a drawing by W. Behnes. My copy of it is inscribed in minute but peculiarly clear handwriting, "Presented to his much esteemed Friend and fellow-traveller Mrs. Robert Nasmyth of Edinburgh. William Upcott," London Institution, August 26, 1833. By his side is a cabinet of medals; in his hands a volume of "Topography," and on the table a deed on which one at once recognises the sign-manual of Queen Elizabeth.

It is impossible to over-estimate the value of the work done by Upcott in providing sources of reliable information for future generations of historians. In my own collection is the following interesting letter of this collector, written nine years before his death:—

AUTOGRAPH COTTAGE, UPPER ST, ISLINGTON

Sep 19 1836

DEAR SIR,—When you favoured me with a visit to take a hasty glance at my collection of autographs I was much pleased to find that you were gratified by the inspection. I expressed a wish, which I still entertain, that this collection—

a labour of more than 25 years—should be placed in the hands of those who could appreciate its value either in a Public Library, or with a private individual of acknowledged taste.

At present, it remains in the same state as when you saw it, nor am I desirous to accede to its removal from my shelves until you shall again repeat your visit, agreeably to your promise.

When may I expect that gratification? Should you deem the mass, as particularized in my printed catalogue, too voluminous to purchase, what say you with possession of the 13 volumes in folio *not* noticed in my catalogue containing 2078 Autographs including Letters and illustrated with 1000 portraits with Short Biographical notices, subjoined, written by myself and bound by Herring in morocco with leather joints. Their contents comprise Sovereigns, Statesmen, Divines, Lawyers, Noble and Military Officers, Medical men, Authors, Men of Science, Artists, Actors, Musicians, Foreigners and celebrated Women with property; printed Title pages and Indexes.

All the Autographs are mounted on tinted drawing paper and those who have examined the drawings pronounce them to be altogether unique. The collecting and writing of the Memoirs cost me 3 years' labour. When my friend Dawson Turner inspected them in 1830 he furnished me with his opinion of its merits of which the following is a copy:—

My dear Upcott,—You asked me as to the value of the 13 volumes of Autographs and I should be glad that, if you are disposed to sell them, I might be allowed to place a price upon them for I have often examined them as you know very carefully, and now think that nobody is much better able than myself to esteem property of this description. Pass on a few short years and these volumes will be one of the best Biographical Records in existence.

"Considered in the four-fold character which they derive from the interest of the individuals they contain, the beauty of the portraits the care you have taken in illustrating the history of the parties and the exquisite beauty and taste with which they are put together:—I certainly know no series of the kind equally desirable, and I regard the whole as un-

questionably unique. Such is my idea of their merit, and their price I should say should be *at least seven hundred pounds.*

I am a single man, without a relation possessing a corresponding feeling with myself. My earnest desire therefore is to see all my articles of vertu as well as Pictures, Drawings, Autographs, and curiously Illustrated Books, pass from me to other hands who can appreciate their works, *without* the notoriety of a public sale. My friend Turner's valuation of the 13 volumes just alluded to has, I find, been backed by the opinion of other collectors, yet if you should entertain the idea of possessing them *I will part with them for 500 Guineas.*

An early answer, stating when I shall be likely to see you will be esteemed a favour, as my intention is to go to Paris for a short time about the end of the month.

Believe me to remain, dear Sir,
Your ever faithful servant,
WILLIAM UPCOTT.

P.S.—Did you mention to your friend my small collection of Original Pictures? You kindly told me you would favour me with his company. My best compliments were on Mr. Lomax and Mr. Bentley, your travelling companions.

It was to his brother autograph collector, Mr. Dawson Turner, of Yarmouth, that Upcott dedicated in 1818 his standard work on the literature of English topography. Mr. Greaves, of Isham Hall, Manchester, apparently missed the chance of a lifetime. He might have acquired for £500 what would be now worth £15,000 or even £20,000.

In 1846 Upcott's *rariora* were sold by Sotheby at Evans's auction-rooms, 106, New Bond Street, and realised £4,125 17s. 6d., and that at a time when the science of autographs was in its infancy. In the "Dictionary of National Biography" reference is made to the large paper copy of the Upcott catalogue now in the British Museum as once belonging to Dawson Turner. Numerous purchases were made

for the national collection, which now form the series known as additional MSS. 15841 to 15957. Amongst these 116 volumes are the papers of John Nicholas, the papers of Brown and Evelyn, Burton's diary, Curtius's letters, the Dayrolles correspondence, the letters addressed to Sir Christopher Hatton, Shenstone's poem, the "Snuff-Box," and many other items of extraordinary interest, including Prior's papers while in Paris, and the papers of the French Army in Italy.

The following are fair examples of the prices realised at this memorable sale of January 22–24, 1846 :—

Lot 43.	*Dayrolles Correspondence.*—1,368 Letters and Documents and Diplomas (A.L.S. fr. Harley, Boyle, Bothmer, St. John, Addison, Craggs, Stone, Holdernesse, George II., Newcastle, Chesterfield, Pelham, &c.)	£110 0 0
Lot 67.	*Autographs of Kings of France* on Vellum.—Original Documents from Philip V., 1319, to Napoleon, 2 vols.	£7 10 0
Lot 140.	*Navy.*—535 Letters and Documents from Papers of Adm. *Norris* w. Portraits (*e.g.*, Blake, Monk, Pr. Rupert, Pepys, Byng, Rooke, Oxford, Lestock, Wager, Anson, Sandwich, Warren, *Nelson*, Keith, Cornwallis, Popham, S. Smith, St. Vincent, &c.)...	£10 0 0
Lot 166.	*Sidney Correspondence.*—66 Letters addressed to Sir Ph. Sidney and his family (*e.g.*, Leycester, Danby, Thanet, Ormond, Sir J. Temple, Robert Sidney, father of Algernon, &c.)	£5 7 6

LOT 199. *Voltaire*—MS. copy of *La Pucelle d'Orleans* w. marginal notes by V., 1755... ... ... £2 3 0

LOT 211. *Napoleon*, as First Consul; *Do.* as Emperor from Wilna and from Moscow, 1812; Portion of Las Cases' Life of Napoleon corrected by N. at St. Helena; Marie Louise as Regent, and various papers £16 0 0

LOT 228. Letter of *Washington*, 1790. Letters and signatures of Adams, Madison, Monroe, Jefferson, Von Buren, &c. £3 10 0

LOT 421. 383 Letters of *literary* men of XVI., XVII. and XVIIIth centuries, most addressed to John Evelyn, w. 62 Portraits (Addison, Attenbury, T. Browne, Boyle, Congreve, Marvel, *Pope*, Prynne, Newton, Flamstead, Pepys, Orrery, Waller, Vanbrugh, Sloane, &c.)... ... ... £80 0 0

LOT 422. 752 Letters of *literary* men of XVIII. and XIXth Centuries, w. 181 Portraits (Boswell, Blair, Beattie, Gifford, Herschel, Horne, Hoole, Percy, Wilkes, Young, &c.) ... £33 0 0

LOT 423. 1,279 Letters of *literary* men XVIII. and XIXth centuries, w. 109 Portraits (Astle, *Byron*, Cary, Ducarel, *Gibbon*, T. Paine, Pownall, *Scott*, White, &c.) £42 0 0

LOT 424. 1,768 Letters of *literary* men XVIII. and XIXth centuries, w. 29 Portraits (Chalmers, Dibdin, *Foscolo*, Hazlitt, Lort, *Malthus*, Pinkerton, Steevens, *Whalley*, Dr. Parr, &c.) £16 0 0

The examination of this truly marvellous cata-

logue not only shows the extent of Mr. Graves's loss, but that the increase of prices between 1827 and 1846 had been infinitesimal. The earliest indications of a noteworthy upward movement are discernible at the Donnadieu Sale of 1851, and still more markedly so at the dispersal of the collections of Mr. Young and Mr. Dillon in 1869. It was reserved for the present year of grace to see a Keats letter sell for £500, and one of Charlotte Brontë for £50. My friend Dr. Scott is quite in despair over the prices of February 28, 1910, and regards the figure at which the Brontë autograph sold as "positively wicked"!

One of the most industrious (but not always discriminating) collectors who followed was Sir Thomas Phillipps, of Cheltenham (1792–1872), who not unfrequently acquired the whole contents of a dealer's catalogue *en bloc*. Sales from the *Bibliotheca Phillippica* have taken place at intervals since 1892, and the store is not yet exhausted.[1] I am personally grateful to this voracious accumulator of autographic treasure, as I picked up at one of the sales seven volumes of eighteenth-century water-colour sketches of Dorset buildings and scenery for—*five shillings!*

In 1832 he wrote the following letter (now in my possession) to the late Sir Henry Ellis:—

February 16 1832

Dear Sir,—You expressed a wish that I would consent to part with my Library of MSS to the British Museum. It cannot be expected that I should make a gift of them after the enormous sum I have paid for them, but I am willing to

---

[1] A further Phillipps sale took place at "Sotheby's," June 6–9, 1910.

cede them, if the nation will pay my debts, which I now owe. The number of MSS I consider to be above 8000 Vols, containing probably 20,000 articles.

Believe me to be yrs truly

THOS PHILLIPPS

PS.—I must observe that the money thus paid, will not be lost to the nation, while the manuscripts will be gained.

The priceless Morrison Collection has already been mentioned. Its dispersal would certainly occasion a dislocation in autograph prices throughout the world.

Since 1900 I have carefully noted the prices realised at all the principal sales in London, and more recently in New York, and although there has been a steady rise in prices for high-class autographs, not a single sale has ever occurred at which some bargain or other might not have been picked up.

The existing firm of Sotheby, Wilkinson, & Hodge, of 13, Wellington Street, Strand (the premises, by a strange coincidence, once occupied by the elder Ireland), was really founded as far back as 1696, when Messrs. Cooper & Milling first began to dispose of MSS.—generally in the evening. The business passed successively through the hands of Messrs. Ballard, Paterson, & Baker. In 1744 Samuel Baker moved to auction-rooms over "Exeter 'Change" in the Strand. At the death of Mr. Baker he was succeeded by Mr. John Sotheby, when the firm became Leigh & Sotheby. From 145, Strand, they removed to the premises in Wellington Street, long familiar to buyers of MSS.

At the "Sotheby" sale of November 1, 1901, I note the following prices:—

	£	s.	d.
Queen Henrietta Maria, D.S.	5	12	6
Queen Victoria, A.L.S., to Lady Dover ... (Now in my collection.)	5	10	0
Sir Walter Scott, A.L.S., 2 pp.	3	10	0
Edmund Burke, A.L.S., 2 pp.	2	10	0
Several A.L.S. of Thos. Campbell, averaged	0	10	0
Several A.L.S. of Wm. Cowper, averaged...	3	0	0
Several A.L.S. of Edwin Landseer, averaged	0	8	0
Several A.L.S. of Thomas Moore, averaged	0	11	0
A fine A.L.S. of William Pitt the elder ...	4	15	0
A whole series of A.L.S. of the Duke of Wellington to Lord Beresford (over 50), nearly all written during the Peninsular War	From 7 to 0	0	0

At the sale of Colonel John Moore's autographs at "Sotheby's" (November 29–30, 1901), I note a magnificent series of Civil War MSS. Amongst the letters sold were the following:—

		£	s.	d.
A.L.S. John Bradshaw	(1644)	24	10	0
„ Sir Wm. Brereton... ...	(1643)	8	0	0
„ Lord Byron	(1652)	7	5	0
D.S.O. Cromwell	(1649)	8	0	0
„ „	(1649)	12	0	0
„ „	(1651)	10	12	6
A.L.S. William, Earl of Derby (with other papers)	(1672)	10	10	0
D.S. Thomas, Lord Fairfax ...	(1643)	9	10	0
L.S. „ „ ...	(1649)	13	0	0
A.L.S. Colonel John Hewson ...	(1648)	8	15	0
D.S. William Lenthall	(1645)	5	0	0
A.L.S. Sir Edward Massey ...	(1660)	2	10	0
D.S. Colonel John Moore ...	(1645)	7	0	0
A.L.S. „ „ „ ...	(1647)	11	0	0
„ „ „ „ ...	(1646)	11	15	0
„ „ „ „ ...	(1650)	8	5	0
A.L.S. Algernon Percy, Duke of Northumberland	(1645)	19	15	0
A.L.S. Sir Christopher Wren ...	(1693)	49	0	0

The two days' sale of 318 lots realised £956 13s.

In the five-days' sale at "Sotheby's," which commenced on December 2, 1901, books and autographs were mixed. The total reached £6,216 11s. 6d. Amongst the autographs figured :—

		£	s.	d.
MS. of Isaac Watts's Address to the Church of Christ assembled in Mark Lane	(1702)	7	0	0
A.L.S. Isaac Watts	(1735)	4	0	0
A.L.S. Thomas Gray	(1758)	15	10	0
A.L.S. Thomas King, actor, to Garrick	(n.d.)	6	15	0
Holograph Prayer by Samuel Johnson, Jan. 1	(1784)	13	0	0
A.L.S. Charles Lamb	(n.d.)	6	0	0
A.L.S. Lord Tennyson, 2 pp., 8vo		7	5	0
"Gathered Leaves," collected by Edmund Yates, including about 100 A.L.S., including two from Dickens and one from Thackeray		49	0	0

(At the sale of Mr. Yates's Library in 1895 "Gathered Leaves" had fetched £65.)

There was a two-days' sale on December 9 and 10, 1901, devoted solely to autographs, in which 478 lots brought £473 12s.

		£	s.	d.
A.L.S. Allan Ramsay, 1 p. ...	(1732)	7	5	0
A.L.S. Sir Walter Scott, 3 pp. ...	(1811)	9	15	0
A.L.S. Lord Tennyson, 1 p. ...	(1854)	3	17	6
A.L.S. Earl of Chesterfield, 2 pp.	(1762)	7	10	0
A.L.S. Thomas Doggett, 2 pp. ...	(1714)	5	2	6
A.L.S. Edward Gibbon, 4 pp. ...	(1789)	13	5	0
D.S. Robespierre (M.)	(1793)	4	15	0

Fifteen A.L.S. of Charles Dickens ranged in price from £6 to 10s.

Of the autograph sales at "Sotheby's" in 1902 the most interesting took place on December 11, 12, and 13. The 865 lots sold realised a total of £1,373 4s. 6d.

Amongst the MSS. sold may be noted:—

		£	s.	d.
A.L.S. Thomas Chippendale ...	(1813)	5	5	0
A.L.S. Garrick to Hannah More...	(1777)	5	5	0
A.L.S. Mendelssohn, 3 pp. ...	(1841)	6	5	0
A.L.S. W. M. Thackeray, 2 pp. ...	(1849)	12	0	0
A.L.S. Samuel Foote, 4 pp. ...	n.d.	8	0	0
A.L.S. David Garrick	(1759)	5	5	0
A.L.S. Samuel Johnson, 2 pp. ...	(1771)	11	15	0
A.L.S. Bishop Percy to S. Johnson (The value of this letter was evidently determined by the person to whom it was addressed.)	(1783)	10	0	0
A.L.S. Verdi	(1863)	5	2	6
A.L.S. Sir T. Fairfax to Duke of Buckingham	(1663)	21	10	0
A.L.S. Hugh Peters, Regicide ...	(1652)	11	0	0
A.L.S. George Eliot, 5 pp. ...	(1859)	22	0	0
„ „ ...	(1859)	9	0	0
„ „ ...	(1863)	7	10	0
A.L.S. Samuel Richardson ...	(1746)	4	18	0
D.S. William Penn...	(1682)	5	17	6
A.L.S. Sarah Siddons	(n.d.)	10	0	0
A.L.S. Sir W. Scott	(1814)	12	15	0
23 A.L.S. Thomas Campbell ...		14	0	0

There were several autograph sales at "Sotheby's" in 1903. The late Mr. Frederick Barker was good enough to price for me the catalogue of the sale of June 23rd–24th. On the first day five long letters of Samuel Richardson to the Rev. Mr. Lobb (1743–56) averaged about £12 12s. A conveyance signed by Guido Fawkes (reputed to have been picked up for 10s.) fetched £101, and a 6½-pp. letter

of Nelson to Sir Alexander Ball was sold for £30 10s. Throughout this sale prices ruled very high—quite a short note of Thackeray's realising £7 5s. A fine series of letters by Earl St. Vincent averaged about £2, but one of these (dated January 17, 1801), in which he wrote: "Nelson was very low when he came here, the day before yesterday, appeared and acted as if he had done me an injury, and felt apprehensive that I was acquainted with it. Poor man! he is devoured with vanity, weakness and folly, was strung with ribbons, medals, &c., and yet pretended he wished to avoid the honours and ceremonies he everywhere met with on the road," brought no less than £9 5s. A number of letters by Edward Fitzgerald, the translator of Omar Khayyám, addressed to Joseph Fletcher ("Posh"), averaged about 30s., and several letters of Charles Dickens £2 2s. each.

The two-days' sale of June 8th and 9th in this year brought no less than £1,963 9s. 6d. for only 618 lots.

Amongst the autographs disposed of at this sale were:—

		£	s.	d.
A.L.S. Robert Browning, 2 pp. ...	(1880)	3	18	0
A.L. Lindley Murray	(1821)	7	0	0
A.L.S. John Boydell	(1804)	5	5	0
12 D.S. Colley Cibber (bearing also the signatures of Wilks and Booth)		18	0	0
MS. Richard Cumberland, relating to altercation between Dr. Johnson and the Dean of Derry		9	0	0
A.L.S. William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke	(1619)	24	0	0
A.L.S. Thomas King to David Garrick		12	10	0

		£	s.	d.
A.L.S. Richard Porson	(1807)	5	10	0
A.L.S. William Smith, actor ...	(n.d.)	5	5	0
A.L.S. Lord Byron	(1811)	12	15	0
A.L.S. Sir W. Scott to Southey ...		12	10	0
MS. Charles Lamb. Lines "The First Leaf in Spring" ...		11	5	0
A.L.S. Shenstone	(1750)	7	0	0
A.L.S. John Keats—28 in number (purchased by Mr. Quaritch).		1,070	0	0
Several letters by De Quincey and Carlyle averaged		3	0	0

Another autograph sale was held at "Sotheby's" on July 23, 1903, and the following days, when some fine letters by Oliver Cromwell, Burns, Dickens, and "George Eliot," were sold at good prices. The last sale of this season took place in Wellington Street on the 19th of November and two following days. The 738 lots in this sale brought a total of £971 12s. 6d.

Amongst the autographs sold were :—

		£	s.	d.
A.L.S. Lord Byron	(1819)	10	0	0
D.S. Sir Francis Drake	(1593)	18	10	0
D.S. Sir R. Hawkins	(1615)	5	5	0
A.L.S. Elizabeth Browning ...	(1844)	3	10	0
A.L.S. William Penn	(1684)	34	0	0
Twenty letters of Charles Dickens averaging only		1	0	0
A.L.S. Colley Cibber	(1742)	5	0	0
A.L.S. Samuel Johnson		6	15	0
A.L.S. Walter Scott to Thomas Moore (enclosing Notes on Byron)	(1829)	37	10	0
A.L.S. Marat		13	0	0
A.L.S. Andrew Marvel		11	0	0

The first autograph sale of 1904 in Wellington Street lasted two days only (13th and 14th of May),

but it included No. 218, the A.L.S. of Nelson to Lady Hamilton (September 25, 1805), 4 pp. 4to, which realised £1,030, possibly still the record price for a single letter. Other letters of Nelson at this sale fetched £16, £13 (two), £6 15s., and £4 15s. A letter of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, beginning with the emphatic words, "Ay, ay, as you say my dear, men are vile inconstant toads," was sold for 15s. only. A great many letters of great interest were included in this catalogue. Amongst them may be noted A.L.S. Beethoven, £30; A.L.S. Sir Stamford Raffles, nearly 25 pp. 4to, described as "giving a most lively and interesting description of the interior description of St. Helena with *Napoleon Buonaparte*, and Napoleon's answers to certain charges commonly brought against him, etc., *marked 'private,' probably unpublished. Off St. Helena, May* 20, 1816." This is now in my collection.

It was at this sale that a letter of the Duke of Wellington fetched the record price (as far as his autographs are concerned) of £101. It was thus described :—

127. EXTREMELY INTERESTING LETTER WRITTEN THE DAY AFTER THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO. LETTERS WRITTEN AT THIS PERIOD BY THE GREAT DUKE ARE EXTREMELY SCARCE.

Poor Canning had my small dispatch box in our battle yesterday and when he was killed it was lost. I shall be very much obliged to you if you will send me another of the same size as the last with the same lock and key and leather cover, &c., as soon as possible. Let it have in it a small silver or thick glass inkstand with one of Braham's patent penholders and one of his pens. What do you think of the total defeat of Buonaparte BY THE BRITISH ARMY? Never was there in the annals of the world so desperate or so hard fought an action or such a defeat. It was really the battle of the Giants.

My heart is broken by the terrible loss I have sustained of my old friends and companions and my poor soldiers. I shall not be satisfied with the battle however glorious if it does not of itself put an end to Buonaparte.

This letter was written at 4 o'clock in the morning after the battle.

The letter before it (126) realised only 8s., and two letters sold together (128) after it, only 9s., although both were excellent specimens of Wellington's style.

There was another autograph sale at "Sotheby's" on July 18th and 19th. In this sale the following prices were obtained :—

		£	s.	d.
Queen Elizabeth. Letter with sign-manual		10	0	0
Henry VIII. Letter with sign-manual		8	10	0
A.L.S. John Keats, 3 pp.	(1818)	35	10	0
A.L.S. Matthew Prior	(1704)	10	5	0
Francis Bacon, note of 10 lines, signed		30	0	0
One hundred A.L.S. of Dorothy Wordsworth		26	0	0

By way of contrast the following letter of the late Sir H. M. Stanley, addressed to the Secretary of the Temple Club, realised only *one shilling* :—

I can assure you it is none the less welcome, on the contrary when my eyes glance over the list of illustrious men composing the Honorary Committee I am lost in admiration of the brilliant prize I have so unexpectedly received. Where Froude and Dickens, Dixon, Taylor, and Hood tread I am only too conscious that very much greater men than myself ought to be proud to follow.

The following A.L.S. of Lady Hamilton's was sold for £12 15s. :—

CLARGES ST., *May* 8, to :

MY DEAREST TYSON,—The long absence of our dearest Nelson makes me apply to you. First I must tell you that what money I had in my banker's hands, I have laid out at Merton, and Lord Nelson thanked me in his last letter and said he would settle with me with thanks when he came home. Could you then my dearest Tyson either on my account or Lord Nelson's lend me a hundred and fifty pounds.

I lately saw, in possession of Mr. Sabin, Nelson's private banker's pass-book during the last eighteen months of his life. With two exceptions every cheque he had drawn was in favour of his "dearest Emma."

A one day's sale of 213 lots at "Sotheby's" on December 1, 1904, brought £582 17s. An account verified by Henry VII. with his royal initials realised £10, and a document with sign-manual of Henry VIII., £7 5s. A Privy Council letter from Whitehall (April 27, 1640) was sold for £8 15s. A series of official papers signed by Bonaparte averaged £3, but a certificate of service signed by Captain James Napoleon sold for more than twice as much. One of the features of this sale was quite a number of letters by Governors, Deputy-Governors, and Judges in Australia. Many of these fetched £10 each. A letter of Colonel William Paterson to Sir Joseph Banks (1805) went as high as £13 10s., and one of David Collins, founder and first Governor of the Van Diemen's Land Settlement, yielded the same price.

This was followed by the sale of December 5th and 6th, in which 4,116 lots brought £1,009 16s. Nelson's letter-book (1796–97) was sold for £150.

A series of six holograph letters from Dr. Samuel Johnson to his friend Sir Robert Chambers, afterwards a judge in Bengal, all said to be unpublished, and extending from October 22, 1762, to April 19, 1783, realised £125; the original galley and second proof sheets of "The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture," with numerous corrections and alterations in the handwriting of Mr. Gladstone, £10 10s.; an autograph letter of John Keats, June, 1819, to Miss Jeffrey, in which he says, "You will judge of my 1819 temper when I tell you that the thing I have most enjoyed this year has been writing an 'Ode to Indolence,'" 4 pp. 4to, £35 (Quaritch); and the autograph manuscript of W. Morris's "A King's Lesson, an Old Story Retold," on six leaves of paper, £27 10s.

The second day's sale included a remarkable series of autograph letters addressed to Mrs. Thrale and inherited by a descendant. Sixteen of the letters were written by Dr. Samuel Johnson, chiefly to Mrs. Thrale; two were from Boswell to the same, and there were others from Mrs. Siddons, Garrick, Goldsmith, Burke, and various other celebrities of the day. The Johnson letters for the most part possessed but little literary interest, but in the longest one in the series, written by Boswell and dated from Banff, August 25, 1773, he refers to his journey in Scotland, and says concerning their arrival at St. Andrews: "The professors who happened to be resident in the vacation made a public dinner and treated us very kindly and respectfully. They showed us their colleges, in one

of which there is a library that for luminousness and elegance may vie with the new edifice at Streatham. But learning seems not to prosper among them ; one of their colleges has been lately alienated, and one of their churches lately deserted." The Johnson letters date from July 19, 1755, to April 15, 1784, and the entire series was sold *en bloc* for £300.[1] The sale also included an interesting series of five autograph letters from S. T. Coleridge to Thomas Poole, 1797–98, giving a history of his life, and covering 17 pages folio and quarto, which fetched £14 10s., and an autograph letter from Charles Lamb to J. H. Green, August 26, 1834, which sold for £6 2s. 6d.

Allusion has been made elsewhere to the excitement caused at the beginning of 1905 by the sale of January 25th, at which the 33 4to pages, described as belonging to the original MS. of "Paradise Lost," were bought in, the reserve price of £5,000 not having been reached.[2]

From the 2nd to the 4th of March following there was a three-days' autograph sale in Wellington Street, in which 905 lots brought £1,834 9s. 6d. A series of letters by General Gordon averaged £1 each ; the Dickens letters disposed of sold better than in 1903 or 1904, realising from £2 to £6, and 52 letters of Gilbert White brought £150. Some splendid musical and dramatic letters collected by the late Mr. Julian Marshall realised high prices, showing a marked advance in this kind of autographs.

[1] A number of these letters, including that of Oliver Goldsmith, are now in my collection, and were utilised in writing "Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale," 1909.

[2] See *ante*, Chapter I., p. 32.

		£	s.	d.
Dr. Arne A.L.S.	(n.d.)	7	0	0
Brahms A.L.S.		4	16	0
Donizetti MS.		5	5	0
Handel Autograph on MS. ...		10	0	0
Haydn A.L.S.		10	10	0
Paganini A.L.S.		6	0	0
Schumann A.L.S.		7	5	0
Scarlati MS. signed...		14	5	0
Schubert MS. signed		12	15	0

The one-day sale of April 13, 1905, was almost entirely devoted to Civil War and Royal autographs, 205 lots (in striking contrast to the Upcott Sale) making a total of £2,009—or nearly £10 each lot! Some of the rarest items fetched the following prices:—

		£	s.	d.
Henry Jermyn A.L.S. ...	(Feb. 22, 1649)	41	0	0
Charles II. L.S.	(May 10, 1649)	15	10	0
James Graham, Duke of Montrose, A.L.S. ...	(Sept. 4, 1649)	48	0	0
William, Prince of Orange, A.L.S. ...	(Nov. 4, 1649)	27	0	0
Abraham Cowley A.L.S.	(Jan. 8, 1650)	31	0	0
Queen Henrietta Maria A.L.S.	(Jan. 8, 1650)	31	0	0
Queen Henrietta Maria A.L.S. (addressed to Charles II.)	(Jan. 25, 1650)	151	0	0
Queen Henrietta Maria (addressed to Charles II.)	(May 20, 1650)	51	0	0

The late Mr. Frederick Barker showed me the whole of this collection bound up in a shabby looking volume, with small rope and thick glue! The separating them without injury was a matter

of the greatest difficulty, and the necessary operation was performed at Oxford.

This was the centenary year of Trafalgar, and its influence was soon felt in the autograph market. The one-day sale at "Sotheby's" on May 17th offered abundant attractions to Nelson buyers; but the 226 lots only fetched £397 10s. The Nelson items were somewhat over-catalogued, and the results were probably disappointing. The highest price paid for a Nelson letter was £25. Some went as low as £3 3s. Nelson's captains fared badly. Letters of Berry, Bickerton, Brereton, and so forth went for two or three shillings each, and Ganteaume, Decrès, and Gravina were equally unfortunate. An order signed by Hardy, informing Admiral Berkeley that three men had been lashed with the "cat-o'-nine-tails," was disposed of for 7s.

Far more important, however, was the sale of the previous week (May 11th, 12th, and 13th), which included the Bunbury MSS. In this sale 842 lots fetched £2,108. The Bunbury correspondence was quite as important to the story of the days of George III. as the documents sold during the previous month were to that of the Civil War. The dispersal of both collections must ever be a matter of regret. I do not think the Bunbury letters would have been sold at all in 1910.

Before the Bunbury portion of the sale was reached a series of twenty-four letters addressed by Mrs. Siddons to Mrs. Pennington, chiefly relating to the troubles occasioned by Thomas Lawrence's courtship of her daughters,[1] was disposed of. They belonged to Mr. Oswald G. Knapp and realised £100. As no letter of Sarah M. Siddons was included in the

[1] See *ante*, Chapter III., pp. 85–6.

lot, I do not regret having acquired the letter catalogued in error as that of her mother. The letters of Mrs. Piozzi to Dr. Whalley (twenty-five in all) published in the Rev. Hill Wickham's book on his ancestor[1] were sold for £16. Mrs. Wickham parted with them for £6, and got little more fifty years ago for Dr. Whalley's correspondence with Mrs. Siddons. Two letters of Burns brought £25 and £14 10s. respectively, and the buyer of the letters written by Sir Thomas Noël Hill, K.C.B., during the campaign in the Peninsula and in Flanders, possibly got a bargain. One Nelson letter only was sold on May 11th. It was addressed to Lady Hamilton from the *Victory*, on May 4, 1805, and realised £71. In my opinion it was far finer than that for which £1,030 was paid. It ran thus:—

Your poor dear Nelson is my dearest beloved Emma very very unwell, after a two years hard fag it has been mortifying the not being able to get at the Enemy, as yet I can get no information about them, at Lisbon this day week they knew nothing about them but it is now generally believed that they are gone to the West Indies. My movements must be guided by the best Judgment I am able to form. John Bull may be angry, but he never had any officer, who has served him more faithfully, but Providence I rely will yet crown my never failing exertions with success, and that it has only been a hard trial of my fortitude in bearing up against untoward events. You my own Emma are my first and last thoughts and to the last moment of my breath, they will be occupied in leaving you independent of the world, and all I long in the world that you will be a kind and affectionate *Father* to my *dear* [a word obliterated] DAUGHTER HORATIA, but my Emma your Nelson is not the nearer being lost to you for taking care of you in case of events which are only known when they are to happen and an all wise Providence, and I hope for many years of

[1] See "Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale," p. 59.

comfort with you, only think of all you wish me to say and you may be assured it exceeds if possible your wishes. May God protect you and MY DEAR HORATIA, prays ever your most faithful and affectionate

NELSON.

The Bunbury MSS. were included in the lots from 607 to 842. Considering their great historical importance the total price paid for them—£896 19s.—can hardly be considered adequate. The Crabbe A.L.S. to Burke (6 pp. 4to), for which I subsequently gave £20, went for £14. Some very important letters of General Dumouriez were sold for £6 10s. and £6 5s., and C. J. Fox's confidential letters to his brother, General Fox, averaged less than £3.

Some important A.L.S. and L.S. of Frederick the Great brought from £6 to £20, and a letter from Oliver Goldsmith to Mrs. Bunbury, partly in verse and extremely witty, was cheap at £82, although it made a record as far as Goldsmith's letter is concerned. Another Goldsmith letter to H. W. Bunbury about his "last literary effort" ("She Stoops to Conquer"), fetched only £50. The letters of the third Lord Holland (1773–1840) went for a song, although every page of them would materially help the historian. The finest letter of Sir Hudson Lowe was sold for £15, and three letters from Pope to Lord Strafford realised £29 10s., £12, and £8 15s. respectively. Ten letters of Matthew Prior in one lot were disposed of at £140. The letters of Charles, Duke of Richmond (1735–1806), to Lady Louisa Conolly almost failed to find buyers, although in reality they were little less historically important than those of Lord Holland. It must not be forgotten that the MSS. of Sir Thomas Hanmer were sold with those of the Hanbury family. An A.L.S. of Sir Richard

Steele to Sir T. Hanmer fetched £25 10s., and one of Swift £18 10s. I am quite unable to understand why a letter of Benjamin West should have brought £24 10s., while a long political letter of the Duke of Wellington to Colonel Bunbury sold for only £6. In these two last lots there were the makings of two books, but Mr. Quaritch obtained the whole of the MSS. relating to the affairs of the Mediterranean, 1806–14, for £35, and those connected with the War in Germany and in Belgium, 1813–15, for £5 more.

The next sale devoted solely to autographs took place at "Sotheby's" on July 8, 1905. It was essentially a Trafalgar commemoration, and 215 lots made a total of £1,034 14s.

In this sale a very curious letter of General Dumouriez to "My good and glorious Nelson," written in English, was purchased for the British Museum by Mr. Quaritch at the low price of £3 7s. 6d.[1] I must content myself with giving the price of the principal Nelson letters now sold.

		£	s.	d.
A.L.S. of Lord Nelson ...	(April 1, 1798)	11	0	0
" " " ...	(October, 1798)	17	0	0
" " " ...	(July 14, 1799)	8	0	0
" " " ...	(July 19, 1799)	7	7	0
" " " ...	(August 29, 1799)	13	10	0
" " " ...	(September 13, 1799)	9	0	0
" " " ...	(September 17, 1799)	8	10	0
" " " ...	(October 11, 1799)	9	0	0
" " " ...	(October 26, 1799)	12	0	0
" " " ...	(November 12, 1799)	9	0	0

(All these letters are addressed to Sir James St. Clair Erskine.)

[1] See "Dumouriez and the Defence of England against Napoleon," by J. Holland Rose and A. M. Broadley, p. 208.

	£	s.	d.
A.L.S. of Lord Nelson ... (February 14, 1801)	9	0	0
„ „ „ ...(September 23, 1801)	15	10	0
„ „ „ ... (May 18, 1803)	26	0	0
„ „ „ ... ... (n.d.)	27	0	0
(These letters are addressed to Lady Hamilton.)			
A.L.S. of Lord Nelson to Sir A. J. Ball (November 7, 1803)	50	0	0

The official dispatch announcing the Battle of Trafalgar and the death of Nelson, from Lord Collingwood to the "Rt. Honble. Lord Robert Fitzgerald, Minister Plenipotentiary, Ambassador at Lisbon," dated October 24, 1805, was purchased by Mr. Sabin for £95. Five letters from Lady Hamilton to Mr. George Rose, Mr. C. F. Greville, and Lord Stowell, were sold for £12, £13 10s., and £27 respectively. Just at the end of this sale two letters of Shelley realised £38 and £20 respectively.

There was another three-days' autograph sale at "Sotheby's" on the 24th, 25th, and 26th of July of this year. The 1,087 lots included in it brought a sum total of £1,578 8s.

In the autumn of 1906 Mr. Frederick Barker, who was held in high esteem as an autograph expert, died, and three sales were devoted to the dispersal of his MSS., but these sales call for no note. In fact, they were felt to be disappointing. Most of Mr. Barker's best "finds" had been parted with during his lifetime. The first of the Barker sales commenced on December 18, 1905. Almost simultaneously the Irving relics were dispersed at "Christie's." Amongst them were a few autographs. The death of the famous actor caused a sudden rise

in the price of his letters, but it has since subsided. On the night before his tragic death Irving had signed a few portrait postcards for my friend Mr. Peter Keary, who has very kindly given me one of them.

The three days of the Barker Sale, with 910 lots, only brought £916 12s. 6d. It should be noted that the price of Nelson autographs since the centenary year of his death has been well maintained, and the writer is well aware that some of the very best of his letters have still to come into the market. Possibly they never will.

The sales of the following year opened with the dispersal of Mr. Barker's Royal autographs on January 22nd. On February 19th, 279 lots belonging to him and relating to Napoleon fetched only £147 5s. 6d. There was another autograph sale at "Sotheby's" on February 26, 1906, when 327 lots yielded £779 18s. Nelsonians were still very much to the fore.

An important bundle of Temple-Greville-Lyttelton-Pitt MSS. was sold for £10 15s. I also notice the following interesting items:—

	£	s.	d.
2 A.L.S. of Benjamin Disraeli about his duel with O'Connell	10	12	6
26 other A.L.S. of Disraeli averaging ...	1	10	0
Naval document signed by Lord Nelson, dated *Victory*, April 29, 1805, showing disposition of ships and the historic signal. (The date given in the catalogue is manifestly absurd)	70	0	0
Lord Nelson A.L.S. to Lady Hamilton (September 24, 1801)	7	10	0
MSS. relating to Keats	70	0	0

	£	s.	d.
Lord Nelson A.L.S. to Horatia, dr. of Lady Hamilton. "My dear Horatia, I send you a watch which I give you permission to wear on Sundays and on very particular days, when you are dressed and have behaved exceedingly well and obedient. I have kissed it and send it with the affectionate blessing of your Nelson and Bronté [*Victory*, January 20, 1804]	51	0	0
Lord Nelson A.L.S. to Lady Hamilton [*Victory*, June 16, 1805]	24	0	0

On the last day of a mixed book and autograph sale, March 27–31, 1906, Ben Jonson's Bible with the words *Benedica Dominum in omni tempore Semper laus eius in ore meo* (Psa. xxxii.), fetched £320. A 2 pp. folio A.L.S. of General Washington (July 20, 1788) was sold for £26 10s., and a number of documents signed by Napoleon averaged about £3. One page of holograph notes in pencil, made at St. Helena by Napoleon, and relating to "Montholon's Mémoires," fetched £16 5s. and another £10. A series of documents and letters signed by Napoleon III. averaged from 1s. to 2s.! The autograph section of this sale, including only 123 lots, realised £981 13s.

The autograph sale of May 19th, at "Sotheby's," was distinguished by a wealth of English Royal autographs and a small series of letters by Lady Hamilton :—

	£.	s.	d.
Charles II. short A.L.S. in French (April 11, 1670)	25	10	0
Richard Plantagenet, Regent of France. Signature "R. York" to State paper ...	85	0	0
Edward VI., sign-manual to superb document dated April 1, 1547	450	0	0

	£	s.	d.
Disraeli, B., A.L.S. to the Duke of Wellington, "Will you accept a mouthful of Caviare? It comes direct from Astrachan. I tasted it, but it seemed selfish to eat it alone—it shall be shared with a friend. But who has a friend? I think I have and so send it to you"...	2	2	0

In this sale 332 lots brought a total of £1,235.

The sale of July 9–10, 1906, attracted a crowd of Wesley autograph buyers. The 296 lots sold realised a total of £1,069 17s. 6d. The seven unpublished letters of Wesley fetched from £2 to £9 5s.—averaging over £4. Oliver Goldsmith's desk-chair figured between some copies of letters by Frederick the Great and the probate of a Wesley will. It went for £39. Another sale on December 1st, comprising 242 lots, brought a total of £725 14s. In this sale some letters of the actress "Kitty Clive" were sold at £17 and £3 3s. respectively. The latter had been mutilated.

The autograph season of 1907 began with a two-days' sale at "Sotheby's"—January 21st–22nd. The 743 lots disposed of realised a total of £1,210 14s. 6d. Another series of eleven Disraeli letters was sold at good prices, ranging from £9 12s. 6d. ("Heard Macaulay's best speech . . . but between ourselves I could floor them all. This *entress nous* (*sic*). I was never more confident of anything than that I could carry everything before me in that house. The Time will come," January 7, 1833) to £2 12s. In this sale Messrs. Maggs acquired a series of twenty-five letters of Johnson to Mrs. Piozzi for £240. Mrs. Mainwaring, of Brynbella, gave £94 for five volumes of "Piozziana," presented by the writer,

H. L. Piozzi, in 1810, to her adopted nephew and heir, John Piozzi Salusbury. At the sale of June 3–4, 1907, Messrs. Sotheby disposed of 459 lots for £1,101 19s. A series of letters about Keats, addressed to John Taylor the publisher, was sold for £44; a notable advance was made in the price of Thackeray letters; Disraeli letters showed a distinct fall, one selling for only 16s., and a very fine letter of Samuel Pepys, covering four folio pages, went to Mr. Sabin for £22. The 315 lots sold on November 8th realised £1,095. For thirty-six letters addressed to Lady Blessington, by Thackerary, Dickens, and others, Mr. Sabin gave £315. A single letter of Shelley's brought £46, and six letters of Byron to Trelawny £70. A letter of Charles I. to the Elector Palatine went to the late Mr. W. Brown for £56.

On March 10–11, 1908, a two-days' autograph sale of 557 lots realised a total of £1,191. A number of Nelson documents, the property of the late Viscount Bridport, Duke of Bronté, were sold for £125.

Six days in June were taken up by the sale of autographs. On June 1, 254 lots realised £260. At this sale I secured for 5s. two most interesting letters of Captain Wright, whose death in the Temple (October, 1805) brought so much obloquy on Napoleon.

Messrs. Sotheby devoted no less than four days (June 15th–18th) to the dispersal of another section of the Phillipps Library. The 855 lots brought £3,796 19s. The sale was devoid of any sensational incidents.

On July 3rd, 252 lots were sold in Wellington Street for £415 18s. Sixteen important letters of Mr. Gladstone sold for £4 10s., and I secured several very interesting Disraeli letters at prices varying from

15s. to 21s. At this sale Disraeli letters went as low as 2s., 3s., 5s., and 7s. A fine series of Thomas Carlyle letters varied in price from £2 2s. to £8 15s. The Sir Arthur Vicars' sale of heraldic and genealogical MSS. (July 27th–28th) excited some interest. The 671 lots brought a total of £1,571 10s. The sale of November 16–17, 1908, was of more than ordinary interest, and the 334 lots of which it was made up realised £1,007 9s. Amongst the interesting MSS. disposed of were—

	£	s.	d.
Robert Burns, 34 lines of verse	25	10	0
Queen Henrietta Maria, A.L.S. ... (n.d.)	20	0	0
Keats, original assignment of poems ...	50	0	0
Cotton Mather A.L.S., October 10, 1720 ...	38	0	0
Schiller A.L.S., January 27, 1791	10	10	0
Swift A.L.S. (short), June 1, 1737	14	15	0

The season of 1909 opened with the Stoddart Sale of historical MSS. (February 22nd–23rd). In this sale 404 lots brought £510 6s. The fine A.L.S. of Mrs. Siddons, now in my collection, fetched £12 5s., or £2 less than it did thirty years ago. The price of Nelson letters was well maintained, a small collection of them, with portraits and sundry relics, fetching £145. A letter to Lady Hamilton, dated March 23, 1801, although covering only half a page, went for £31. On March 1st (a one-day's sale) 201 lots brought £798 2s. 6d. A short letter of Keats sold for £25 10s., two A.L.S. of James Wolfe for £35 10s., and a fine holograph letter of Raphael Sanzio d'Urbino for £41. A series of MSS. relating to the American War of Independence (including four letters and documents signed by Washington) was purchased by Messrs. Maggs for £40. I have already

alluded to the sale of June 9th–10th, from which the Windham correspondence was withdrawn. The remaining 524 lots realised no less than £2,145 10s. 6d. A series of twenty-four Nelson letters and other MSS. relating to him was purchased by Mr. Sabin for £121, a very low price considering that fourteen letters of Lady Hamilton went with the others, as well as Nelson's original will and seven codicils, *from which eight signatures had been removed!* Mr. Quaritch, at this sale, gave £275 for the correspondence of John Robinson, Secretary of the Treasury, 1770 to 1782, which included 194 letters from George III. These MSS. have an important bearing on both American and British history, and ought to have been acquired by the nation along with the Windham papers. A one-day's sale on July 22nd, consisting of only 269 lots, realised £1,113 14s. 6d., and another on December 17th, composed of 269 lots, brought a total of £1,318 6s. A rise in price at both these sales was very marked. In the first a song of Burns (2 pp.) fetched £57, and two unpublished letters of Lord Byron £17 10s. and £28 respectively. £20 was paid for some notes of Goethe in pencil, and £40 for a 2 pp. 8vo letter of Shelley. It was in the latter that the twenty-four letters of Beethoven were sold for £660. On the same day Mr. Cromwell gave £31 for an exceedingly interesting letter addressed to the Genevan Senate, signed by Oliver Cromwell.

On the 28th of January of the present year (1910) 264 lots realised £742 13s. 6d. It was on this occasion that £50 was given for an 8½ pp. 8vo letter of Charlotte Brontë. It is doubtless a high price, but only just before Mr. Sabin paid £17 10s. for a letter of Mr. R. Waldo Emerson to Thomas Carlyle

(October 7, 1835), and Mr. Quaritch gave £56 for a 2 pp. 4to letter of George Washington to S. Powell (May 25, 1786). Within a few days no less than £81 was expended on a blue Hawaian postage-stamp, in Leicester Square. About a quarter of that sum gave Mr. Sabin, on February 28th, a long holograph poem of Frederick the Great addressed to Algarotti, beginning with the lines:—

> My trembling timid pen
> Presents its first attempt
> To the rigid public censor,
> To assure it against attacks
> May Minerva guide it.

The cost of the Hawaian "specimen" would have sufficed to buy both the poem of the Prussian King and Charlotte Brontë's touching confession that the "only glimpses of society she ever had were obtained in her vocation of governess," and her earnest appeal to the necessity of a creed.

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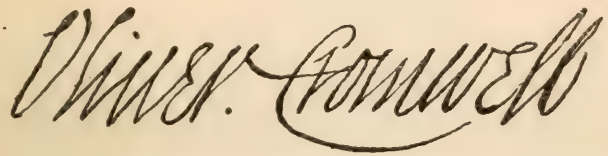

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